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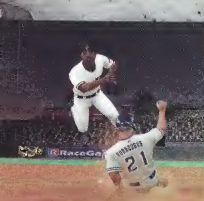
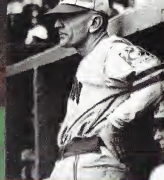
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Issue 191

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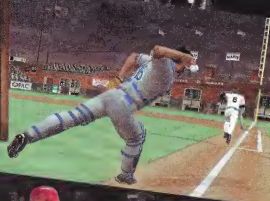
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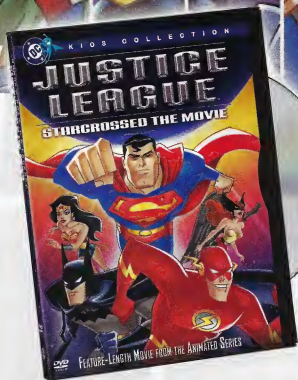


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22 X-Men Legends Exclusive

Creating a video game starring the world's most famous team of superheroes is a daunting task, but Raven Software and Activision stepped up to the challenge. Picking 15 X-Men to represent was the least of their worries.

28 E3 Showstoppers

The Electronic Entertainment Expo celebrated its 10-year anniversary with an amazing display of video games and a couple of hot new handhelds, too. The Nintendo DS and the Sony PSP top the list of cool stuff the editors uncovered at E3. Let the controversy begin!

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One of the GameCube's most unusual superheroes is back, and this time, he's making a move on the PlayStation 2, too. Here's the lowdown on Viewtiful Joe 2.

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Cover art courtesy of Activision

...WINNING

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If you don't refine your gunslinging skills before you head off into this wicked Wild West shootout, you're definitely heading for the Last Roundup! Here's how to polish your aim and out-think the bad guys in Red Dead Revolver.

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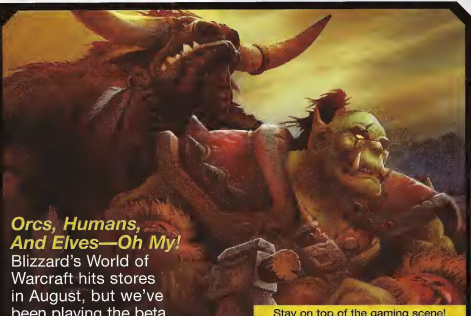
What can professional musicians do with MTV Music Generator 3? We tracked down a few bands and asked them to give the game a go. Listen to the tunes on GamePro.com.

Doomsday

Does Doom 3 live up to the hype? Is it a game or a tech demo? Did it scare us? Do you really want to know? We play through it at the end of July and give you the lowdown.

Orcs, Humans, And Elves—Oh My!

Blizzard's World of Warcraft hits stores in August, but we've been playing the beta. Is it worth checking out?



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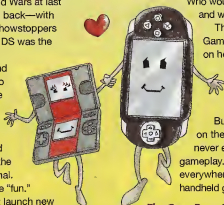
JUST
MANKIND.

Let's All Hold Handhelds

Sony hurled the opening salvo of the New Handheld Wars at last year's E3, and at this year's show, Nintendo fired back—with formidable effect. You can read all about it in the E3 Showstoppers special feature this issue, of course, but the Nintendo DS was the bonafide buzz-buster at the show.

Make no mistake, the Sony PSP looks very cool and will be very cool when it arrives in 2005, but Nintendo again demonstrated its uncanny knack for wowing the crowds at the video game "here-and-now" that is E3. The lines for DS hands-on time were longer than Disneyland's, but they were worth the wait. Odd how the dual-screen concept, which sounds strange and weird from afar, makes perfect sense once you have the opportunity to play around with it up close and personal. Nintendo once again proves that it knows how to digitize "fun."

The DS also demonstrated that Nintendo just can't launch new hardware without trying to leave its imprint on input. At least the GameCube controller and the WaveBird felt familiar, but stylus gameplay?



The GamePros, Oakland, CA
letters@gamepro.com

Who would've thunk it? The lab boys at Nintendo did... and whether you're ready for it or not, here it comes.

There's also an interesting flip-flop from the GameCube versus PlayStation 2 match-up going on here, too, with Nintendo promoting backward compatibility (the DS will play GBA games) and Sony pushing a brand-new proprietary mini-disc format (called the UMD). This is what is sometimes known as "irony."

But whatever you call it, portable systems are on the verge of an evolutionary change like you've never experienced before. Nintendo has flair and gameplay. Sony has style and numbers. And gamers everywhere can look forward to a brave new world of handheld gaming.



For his smart and eloquent letter, Steve will receive a Logitech Cordless Action Controller. Congrats!

Trade Secrets

I've been gaming since the Atari, Intellivision, and Odyssey days. Being in my late 30s and having children, I don't get to buy the number of games that I used to in my younger, single days. In fact, I've found myself trading in games to get new games. In the past, when trading in games with the major retailers (EB Games, GameStop, etc.), I would walk away with \$100-\$120 in credit. Some single games were getting me \$15 in store credit.

It's been a while since I've traded in some games, so I took my oldest son (who's seven years old) to the local video-game store, which is a major retail chain. I traded in 15 games, 10 for the PS2 and five for the Xbox. The total amount of credit given...\$53! The highest credit was \$8 for Red Faction II. Most credits were in the \$1-\$3 range—stuff like Aggressive Inline, Dead to Rights, Deus Ex, and Dead or Alive 3. Yet to buy these games (even used), you'd pay in the \$20-\$25 range! I'd sure love to buy some of these great games for \$1-\$3, just like the store did from me.

So my question is, why do people do it? I guess I have answered it myself. Looking at the receipt, I wish I would have kept half those games. But I wanted a new game and didn't want to fork out cash for it. But with online auction sites, I think I will start posting my games there in the future.

► Steve H.—Weston, FL

Trading in your used games is always a question of desire, convenience, and perceived value. If you're really truly done with everything that a



game has to offer and you just want to clear out your collection, trading in might be fine—but if you feel those games have any value at all, emotional or monetary, it's often hard to walk away from a trade-in feeling like a satisfied customer.

One reason that trade-ins are not worth as much as many more is that the market is flooded. You've seen the reports of what a big business video games has become, and if more people are buying games, that means more people are also selling their games used. There are probably already a ton of used copies of the high-profile titles in stock by the time you stroll in; the store doesn't really need more copies, so it doesn't want to pay all that much for yours. And if you're trading in a game that wasn't a hit, chances are that few people want it, so you won't get much for it. The bottom line: In an average trade, you're probably not going to get what you feel the game is worth.

Selling your games online or trading them with other gamers is growing in popularity for just that reason. You can find just about any game you can think of on eBay; whether it's a price you want to pay is another matter. Game trading sites like gamez.com will probably give you the absolute best value as many players are willing to swap a game for a game or openly list what their personal value

is for any given title—if it's worth, say, three stars to them and four stars to you, at least you have a place to start negotiating. Even if you have two so-so games and someone else has one really good game to trade, you're still getting a \$15-\$20 value for each of your traded-away titles, and that would probably put your mind at ease. Our advice: Hit the web and learn the trade, or find other gamers in your area and arrange a local swap meet.





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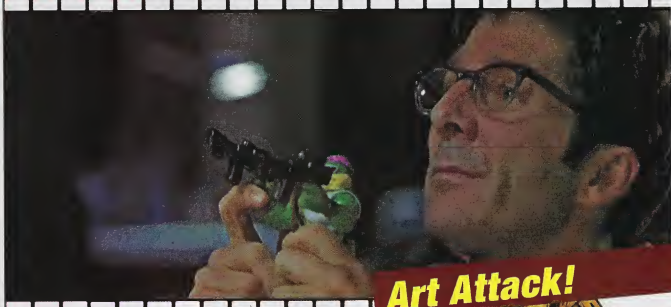


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Runaway GamePro

Okay, so I was watching the movie *Runaway Jury* the other night and I saw this one part where this guy had an action figure in his hand—a Major Mike figure! I was like, “What the hell?” and wondered how it got there. In the movie, he plays a game-store clerk, and in his apartment, I saw some *GamePro* stuff lying around. Does the *GamePro* staff know anyone who made the movie? I’d very much like to cure my curiosity.

► **Steve—Henryetta, OK**

Yep, that’s our very own Major Mike enshrined forever as a celluloid hero. We got a call from the movie people asking if they could use some of our action figures in the film—there are scenes with hackers, and the film-makers wanted the hackers’ workstations to look authentically game-geeky. So, we gave them permission to use the *GamePro Presents* action figures by JoyRide, including the rare ones of the *GamePro* editors, and sent them the prototypes. Major Mike got some decent screen time, and you can spot a Dr. Zombie figure in the background of some scenes, too. Funny thing is, those figures never came home; the prototypes were never returned. We can only assume they were sent directly to the Smithsonian.

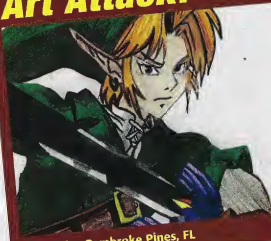
You Can’t Play If You Don’t Win

I am the Grand Prize Winner of the 2003 *GamePro* Holiday Super Hunt Sweepstakes, and I am writing to say a big thank you for having such a great contest! I received my prize, an Alienware gaming PC, last week, and my whole family loves it! It’s so beautiful and incredibly powerful. I can now play games that my old PC couldn’t handle. Thanks again!

► **Harold Roraback—Via Internet**

You’re quite welcome, Harold—thanks for the report, and thanks for entering the scavenger hunt in the first place. We’re always doing neat contests over at *GamePro.com*, plug, plug—you could be next.

Art Attack!



Pick of the Month!

P. Castillo—Pembroke Pines, FL

Poll Vault

Final Fantasy XII looks like it will be...

stupid; they should just stop.

23%

better than that X-2 crap.

18%

okay, but they need a new platform.

25%

the best FF ever!!

34%

Results courtesy of *GamePro.com*—log on and be heard!

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HEAD2HEAD

GamePro: The Game

I'm a subscriber, and I think GamePro is the coolest magazine out there. You've played millions of games, so I'm wondering why you don't go into the business of making video games yourselves. With all your knowledge and all the feedback you get from all the people who write to you, it seems like you should be able to make good games. Have you ever thought about making or producing games?

► Brandon Gaines—Dothan, AL

Funny you should mention it, Brandon. It's with a heavy heart and insane jealousy that we bid farewell to D-Pad Destroyer; after this issue, he'll be joining the fine folks at BioWare, working on games like Jade Empire and who knows what else. D-Pad's not the only Pro to make the jump to "the other side" of the game biz—other GamePro alumni have gone on to help in the success of everything from Star Wars:

Knights of the Old Republic to the mighty empire of Pokémon. As for the rest of us, as soon as we saw through these chains or gnaw off a leg, maybe we, too, can live out our dreams of writing games instead of merely writing about them. But probably not.

The Heat Is (Not) On

I just got my copy of *GamePro* #188 (May 2004). I have been waiting for it, especially for one thing: It's baseball season. I love playing baseball games and have since Bases Loaded on the NES. I've seen your articles on all the new baseball games, and I can't figure out what the hell happened to my favorite one: High Heat Baseball. How come you guys haven't covered it or said when it comes out? I hope they are still going to make this game because I think it's the best. Can you please just tell me what the deal is? Thanks.

► Chris Hamby—Maryville, TN

It's coming back—just not yet. High Heat Major League Baseball was a 3DO title, and

3DO, as you may have heard, went out of business last year. Its franchises and titles in development were sold off to the highest bidders, and in the case of High Heat, the highest bidder was Microsoft. Microsoft's baseball series, Inside Pitch, has been put on hold this year (along with the rest of the XSN titles), and Microsoft has not announced what it plans to do with either IP or HHMLB. We probably won't know until next season.

For more letters, go to GamePro.com!

Got a strange urge to communicate with the *GamePro* editors? E-mail them at "editor's name"@gamepro.com!

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READER REVIEW

Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time

Forgiveness is divine (so let's not talk about Prince of Persia 3D). But this time, there was no need to forgive. On the contrary, it should be everyone who had doubts about Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time who should be forgiven. This game takes a classic and creates another.

The Sands of Time stars the Prince, who is once again caught up in something he would rather not be; of course, the problem is his own doing. Mom always said, "If you release The Sands of Time, which turns everyone into vicious monsters, on an entire city because you were gullible enough to believe what some evil vizier tells you, then you deserve what you get!" So to speak. The game feels a lot like countless adventure games at first, but as time goes by, it feels like other adventure games are clones of this game. The fluid gameplay makes pulling off complicated-looking acrobatic stunts to bypass traps and enemies a satisfying breeze, and saying the game looks pretty would be a flat-out understatement. The environments are downright gorgeous, the enemies are properly menacing, and every character acts smoothly. But the standalone thing that made the original Prince a classic was its puzzles—and The Sands of Time is stuffed with them. Every puzzle feels like it belongs there and is almost never frustrating. The audio accurately punctuates every situation, and listening to the Prince complain is a treat.

Although the game's formula of fight bad guys, solve puzzle, fight bad guys, solve another puzzle can get repetitive, the creative level design shields your eyes from that minor detail. This game just feels...good. Any adventure fan would be crazy not to take a serious look at this one.—Gladio

Agree? Disagree? Or just think you can do better? Write your own user reviews at GamePro.com, and maybe you'll see your opinions here next.

Art Attack!



C. Atkins—Rocky Mount, VA

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BUYERS BEWARE

Benjamin Franklin once said, "In this world, nothing is certain but death and taxes." In the video-gaming world, bugs and disc errors have become the source of inescapable pain, sending gamers into fits of rage and grief. Despair not—while you can't cheat taxes, you can work around some of those prickling game bugs.

Outbreak of Glitches

I recently bought a copy of Resident Evil Outbreak, and it's probably one of the best RE titles, but I've noticed something that always happens when I'm using Alyssa. It seems that every time I play her offline, the game freezes when I'm close to finishing the scenario. Is there any reason why this attack on my sanity happens? Thanks!

► Simon Lam—Via Internet

You aren't the first one to encounter this problem, and actually Capcom has noticed it, too. For some reason, using the Adlib button even once with Alyssa will cause the game to freeze, especially in the first scenario. Easiest solution is to stay away from the Adlib button—you don't need to use it anyway.

Disc Error Champions

My friend and I recently purchased Champions of Norrath. The game is great and can be played for hours. But we have had many problems with it. For instance, sometimes the floor would disappear and leave only blackness under the character. This could be solved most of the time by just going back to town. But now when we try to load a game, it will not stop loading. We do not want to have to pay another \$40-\$50 on a game that will keep screwing up. Is there anything we can do to fix this problem?

► Mark Ryan—Via Internet

Many people have complained about the game freezing, and the problem isn't even limited to old PlayStation 2s, which is often attributed to freezes and dirty disc errors. We contacted Sony's Online Entertainment, receiving these suggestions:

- 1) Housecleaning: Scoop up all the stuff on the ground and sell it. The game keeps track of all the items on the ground for each level, taking up more memory if you leave loot where it is. Taking all the items and selling them will free up the system resources, making your game less freeze-prone.
- 2) Run the diagnostic mode on the PlayStation 2: Chances of this one succeeding aren't very high, but take out any CD or DVD in your tray, pull out the memory card, and hit the Δ button while in the first menu (where it says Brower and System Configuration). This will take you to the menu that says Version Information. The top menu item should say Console with the version next to it (for example, SCPH-30001). Go to that menu item and hit the Δ button. Turn on the diagnostic mode, place a game into the PS2, and run it. Let the diagnostic tools run on the game for about five minutes, then see if you still get the same errors.
- 3) If you're still under warranty, and you have problems with disc errors and freezing on other

games, you can send the PlayStation 2 back to Sony to get it fixed. Call SCEA's customer service at 800/345-7669 Monday through Saturday 6 a.m.–8 p.m. Pacific Standard Time, and Sunday 7 a.m.–6:30 p.m. PST.

There's also a crude way to try to fix the errors—while the game is stuck in the loading screen, eject the game and put it back in. Leave the game alone for 5–10 minutes (and pray). Not exactly a foolproof method, but it has worked before.

There are two things you should never do when getting such errors:

- 1) Blow compressed air into the PlayStation 2: If you do not have the PlayStation 2 dismantled and blow air into the console, you're simply rearranging the dust inside the console, making things even worse. It's just not the same as when you blew on your SNES cartridges back in the day.
- 2) Beat the PlayStation 2: You're in Courageous mode, you just beat the Vampire boss, and the game has arbitrarily quit on you. Smacking your PS2 won't exorcise the gremlins in your machine, though you may swear it worked in the past. Unlike cartridge-based consoles, DVD readers are very delicate, and laying down your righteous fury on the console will only compound the issues.

If you have similar problems with other games and your PlayStation 2 warranty has expired, you might want to check out Buyers Beware in our February issue, where we walk you through opening the console to clean the system.

Broadband Incompatibility With Action Replay

Almost a year ago, Datel shipped its Action Replay MAX for the PlayStation 2. From day one, the biggest feature Datel touted was that you can go online and download codes automatically. This seems like a great feature, except for one thing: It doesn't work for many people who try it. The issue, as Datel has admitted, is that it only works with a broadband connection but does not work with PPPoE protocol. This is a serious problem because that's what most major broadband carriers use, including Verizon, Pacific/Atlantic/Southern Bell, MSN, and Comcast. Datel knows about this problem but doesn't print anything on its website about it, outside of a couple quick mentions in forum posts that you have to really dig for. It doesn't put a disclaimer in its ads, in its online store, or on the box. Doesn't it owe its customers some sort of explanation and its potential customers a fair disclaimer/warning?

► Anonymous—Via Internet

We gave Datel's technical support a call to verify this, and it's true—PPPoE (which stands for Point-to-Point-Protocol over Ethernet) is not compatible with the online downloading function for the PS2 Action Replay MAX. As you have said, many ISPs use PPPoEs as it is easy to configure and works well for users—and unfortunately there's no way around the issue unless you change to an Internet service provider that doesn't use PPPoE. In addition, dial-up connection is not compatible with the downloading feature of the Action Replay MAX, so it's something to definitely be aware of if you're planning to buy one.

Submissions

At GamePro, listening is what we do best. When you have a problem with a product or feel you've been ripped off, we want to know. Write to:

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E3 2004: All the News That Fits

EA loves it Live, PS2 drops to \$149, and Link is finally growing up

The Electronic Entertainment Expo began on Wednesday, May 12—but most of the real action took place in the two days prior as Microsoft, Sony, and Nintendo each hosted press conferences full of boasts, teasers, rhetoric, and even a few honest-to-goodness surprises.

Microsoft

Microsoft's Monday evening event at the Shrine Auditorium felt the loosest with Microsoft offering attendees green apple martinis and poking fun at itself (notably, what a flop Azurik was) and at the competition with a scathingly funny spoof of *The Apprentice*. Called *The Novice*, the short film featured Microsoft Corporate Vice President J Allard, Microsoft CXO Robble Bach, and Microsoft third-party liaison Peter Moore as Team Xbox battling Team PlayStation, comprised of Sony exec look-alikes named "Kaz," "Andrew," and "Ken." Donald Trump himself appeared (Allard later called Trump "the ultimate first-person shooter") and challenged the teams to build an online gaming network. Guess who won, amid jokes about Sony's press releases, product announcements for PS2 peripherals that have yet to appear, and Peter Moore's poke at his Sega past ("How do you feel about a Chu Chu Rocket pack-in?" he asked one person during the skit). The final insult: Team PlayStation, heading back to their hotel to play Halo, had their cab stolen by Bill Gates.

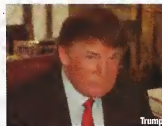
Allard then showed some of Live's new and upcoming features, including an impressive three-way video chat and Xbox Live Arcade, a new option aimed at casual gamers who want to play Dig Dug, Bejeweled, Poker, and other quickies. Allard also stumped for the recently announced XNA development platform, which creates a common environment for Xbox and PC games to ease programming chores.

Peter Moore introduced Bungle's Joe Staten and Max Hoberman, who demoed Halo 2's new multiplayer features, including dual wielding and vehicle hijacking. Peter Moore revealed Halo 2's release date by rolling up his sleeve and showing a "tattoo" on his arm—his number 9 with the Halo 2 logo below it. "And yes...that is 2004," he was quick to add.

The biggest non-surprise of the conference was the heavily rumored announcement of EA Sports offering Live support in this year's crop of games. Robble Bach was joined by EA's Don Mattrick and a collection of sports stars, including Carmelo Anthony, Marshall Faulk, and Muhammad Ali, to officially announce the deal. In addition to the entire nine-game EA Sports line, Live support will also be programmed into *Need for Speed Underground 2*, *GoldenEye: Rogue Agent*, *Burnout 3*, *TimeSplitters 3: Future Perfect*, and *Battlefield: Modern Combat*. "There's a changing of the guard in the industry," concluded Bach. "Xbox is moving to side with innovation—we hope you'll join us."



Allard



Trump



The Greatest

Sony

The next morning, Sony held its own conference at one of its L.A. film soundstages. Sony Computer Entertainment America President and CEO Kaz Hirai, as usual, brought impressive numbers to the event, claiming 170 million PlayStation, PlayStation 2, and PS one consoles had shipped worldwide with combined PlayStation/PlayStation 2 software shipments topping 2.5 billion. He noted that Sony had done the impossible, "leading in two consecutive hardware generations," and focused the first part of his presentation on Sony's commitment to "long sustainable life cycles." He announced an immediate price drop to \$149 and said "2004 is a growth year for online gaming on PS2." For its new online plans, Sony claims it won't interfere with online PS2 titles, allowing developers to keep control and keep their intellectual property (a jab at Microsoft's heavy involvement with Live-enabled titles). "The content creator controls its own destiny," said Hirai. But Sony does plan to assist with a standard protocol and the billing end of purchasable content (similar to Apple's iTunes model but for game content). To help with the storage of this content, Sony will also be releasing a



Hirai



PS2

larger-format memory card—again, no details there either. Hirai summed it up with: "We must evolve the experience of online gaming. Non-revenue-generating online gameplay is the norm but not for long."

But as expected, the PSP was the focus of the spotlight's glare. No price points were announced, but Sony's entry into the portable gaming market will be launched first in Japan in late December. It will follow in the U.S. and Europe in March 2005, and lastly in Korea in summer 2005. Disappointingly, no live PSP gameplay was uncorked, though trailer footage of *Death Jr.*, *Wipeout*, *ATV Offroad Fury*, *Metal Gear Solid*, *Spider-Man*, *Ape Escape*, *Hot Shots Golf*, *Twisted Metal*, *MediEvil*, *Ridge Racer*, *Tony Hawk*, *Dynasty Warriors*, and *Darkstalkers* was shown. EA's Don Mattrick, apparently well rested from the previous evening's activities, promised four launch titles for the PSP: *NBA Street*, *NFL Street*, *Need for Speed Underground*, and *Tiger Woods PGA Tour Golf*. So far, Sony has enlisted PSP support from 34 Japanese developers, 24 U.S. developers, 31 European developers, and 10 South Korean developers—which is pretty much the entire video-game industry.

Sony also laid out in more details its plan for Cell technology, which will form the backbone of the PS3. The company's goal is to make a common development environment for movies and games. Movie studios could then use it to create assets like special effects or rendered scenes for films, then those exact same assets could be used by game developers. Sony plans to release a prototype by fourth quarter 2004. Masa Chatani, the chief technology officer for SCEI, spoke of a future "Cyber World" of networked Cell-based machines and called it "the future of broadband entertainment."

I think we're in for another
genre-defining moment for survival horror.
Most Anticipated of 2004 award - IGN

Call of Cthulhu filled us with awe and dread.

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Bethesda once again blazes a trail
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- ActionTrip

CALL OF CTHULHU

Dark Corners of the Earth



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A few hours later, Nintendo's Executive VP of Sales and Marketing Reggie Fils-Aime took the stage at the Hollywood and Highland Complex in Los Angeles, saying, "We are not going to run our company just for hardcore gamers...it's Nintendo's job to make sure we satisfy all gamers." After sneak peeks at Metroid Prime 2, Star Fox 2, and RE4, Fils-Aime spoke about the strength of Nintendo's game library past and present, saying that "He with the best games wins—always been that way, always will."



Miyamoto

George Harrison, senior vice president of sales and marketing, said that Nintendo's market share was up for the last two quarters, while the industry as a whole was down. He also said that the wireless GBA SP adapter, already a hit in Japan, will reach U.S. shores and that a dozen U.S. titles should be compatible with it by the end of the year. By the time Sony launches its PSP unit, Nintendo expects to have sold 25 million GBA SPs. "Before you ask if the PSP can catch the Game Boy Advance...ask if the PlayStation 2 can catch the Game Boy Advance," said Harrison, to a reaction of both hoots and boos. Discussing how much impact the PSP will have on Nintendo's 100 percent handheld market share, Harrison quipped, "Will that decline? Well, it certainly can't go up." He stressed the SP's durability and battery life, two things the PSP will have to prove to consumers.

Fils-Aime then brought out the machine many had come to see: a prototype of the Nintendo DS, which he said not only stood for Dual Screen but also "developer's system," and backed it up with video testimonials from executives and programmers from Capcom, Konami, Square Enix, Activision, EA, and more. No price was announced (Fils-Aime said that the DS is expected to be "affordable"), but the system is expected to ship in the U.S. and Japan this year with Europe and Australia's launches in early 2005. The product's name, however, is expected to change.

Nintendo of America President Satoru Iwata held a DS aloft and said, "DS is not simply new—it is different. That word, 'different,' also defines our next home system." Iwata teased with large concepts about the successor to the GameCube but offered no hard details, saying, "Better technology is good, but it is not enough," and chose not to reveal technical specs on the next system because they "really don't matter" in comparison to the game experiences themselves. "The time when horsepower alone made a difference is over," he said.

And then, all hell broke loose with a video reel of the next Zelda GameCube game, featuring a mature Zelda similar to the one shown several years ago as part of some GameCube demo visuals. The video ended to thunderous cheers, but they intensified when Shigeru Miyamoto himself came out on stage and struck several heroic poses with Link's trademark sword and shield. He promised that the new Link would "act different and look different...in order to grow, Link cannot stand still—and neither can I."



Fils-Aime

Reggie Fils-Aime retook the stage, summarizing that "we're giving players what they want," noting that the DS "reinvents portable entertainment," and saying that "this is a new day for Nintendo...we're all about the games, all about the gamers, and that means all about you."

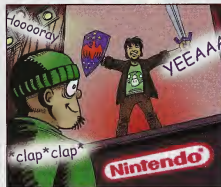
Best-Selling Video-Game Titles: April 2004

TITLE	PLATFORM	PUBLISHER
1 Flight Night 2004	PlayStation 2	EA Sports
2 NBA Ballers	PlayStation 2	Midway
3 Flight Night 2004	Xbox	EA Sports
4 MVP Baseball 2004	PlayStation 2	EA Sports
5 Pokémon Colosseum	GameCube	Nintendo
6 Resident Evil Outbreak	PlayStation 2	Capcom
7 Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow	Xbox	Ubisoft
8 NBA Ballers	Xbox	Midway
9 Halo	Xbox	Microsoft
10 Hitman: Contracts	PlayStation 2	Eidos Interactive

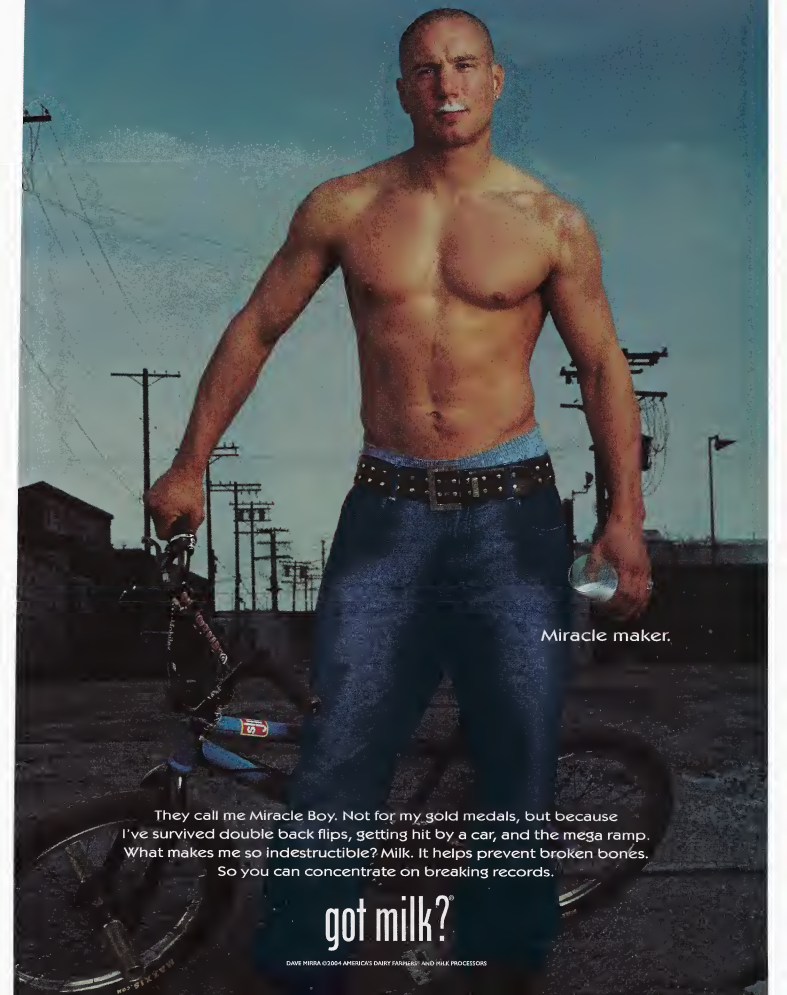
Source: The NPD Group/NPD Funworld

static Resident Evil 4... Resident Evil 4...okay, so there were some interesting E3 moments that you won't find detailed in our big Showstoppers feature. Like when Tekno Drifter, eager to get on the road, started pulling away from the hotel while the car door was open and Miss Spide was trying to get in. It's funny now. • Dan Esler, who was wearing the Nintendo press conference was packed with fingers held to cheer at everything said or shown by NOA. Most of the other editors say, "That's just Nintendo fans." • Once again, there were big scary signs that said, "No one admitted under 18" and once again, there were tons of tears on the show floor. If they really mean it, why is there a badge holder preprinted with the words "Underage Guest"? Here's a solution: Extend the show to a fourth day and let the public in; with no age restriction you charge \$20 a head, make a ton of money, generate early buzz for all those games, and nobody will feel the need to sneak in. • Congratulations to Titris, who won a free pass to E3 courtesy of GamePro.com. How'd he get it? Sybil asked in the forums if anybody wanted one. Yes, it was that easy. You should participate in our website discussions more often. • The sound meter got a workout: the results are in the Showstoppers feature. But the average noise level on the show floor was about 20 dB higher than a normal conversation—or roughly standing in the middle of heavy truck traffic. The loudest booths were on par with power tools. Seriously. • More weird stream-of-consciousness E3 ramblings are available at GamePro.com—look for Dan's E3 blog. • The Zelda trailer...the Zelda trailer...the Zelda trailer...the Zelda trailer...

Internal Combustion



Babbles: Auch'n Amrich Doodies: Mao



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PlayStation 2



MARVEL

SPIDER-MAN

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X-Men Legends

Cover Feature

QUAD DAMAGE

EXCLUSIVE
HANDS-ON
PREVIEW



WHO SAYS THERE'S NO "X" IN "TEAM?" RAVEN AND ACTIVISION KICK UP THE ACTION/RPG NICHE A NOTCH—FOUR NOTCHES, ACTUALLY—WITH THE AMBITIOUS, EVOLUTIONARY X-MEN LEGENDS. BY DAN ELEKTRO

When it comes to classic teams, there's no shortage of choices. The 1969 "Miracle Mets." The Marx Brothers. Sonic and Knuckles. But when it comes to the realm of comic books, you need only one letter: X. Marvel's X-Men have defined the comic-book team since their inception in 1963; over 40 years later, Activision's long-awaited X-Men Legends, developed by Raven Software, will be the first video game to really convey the X-Men's essential team aspect and the first RPG to put the combined powers of 15 of Marvel's mutants into a single player's hands.



X-Men Legends features over 20 unique boss encounters, including this skirmish against Toad.

HIGHLY EVOLVED

X-Men Legends was first discussed all the way back in 2000. "The general idea of an X-Men RPG sort of mutated along the way," reveals Blaine Christine, producer for Activision. "We had various incarnations of 'Should it be turn-based? Should it be real-time? What we ultimately ended up finding was that the license leads us toward real-time action. Using your superpowers in real time, especially with an entire team of X-Men, is something that hasn't been done before. It allows us to use superpowers in new and interesting ways, to solve puzzles, et cetera, unlike fighting games that have used the X-Men before. So it leads you down this whole new path of cool ideas where you have this epic, interesting story, tons and tons of superpowers that you upgrade throughout the course of the game, all these cool characters, all these cool villains—it just goes on and on."

The game's plot revolves around a young mutant named Allison Crestmere, better known as Magma, an underdeveloped New Mutants character with the power to control molten rock—and a chance to become a major player. "Allison gets in a fight with some of her friends, she sets off her powers accidentally, and the Brotherhood is there to apprehend her and say, 'Join us!,'" says Christine. "The X-Men show up and rescue her, and that's our opportunity to kick off the story."

For the script, Raven turned to Man of Action, a four-man creative team comprised of ex-X-scribes Joe Kelly, Joe Casey, Duncan Rouleau, and Steven Seagle. "We started with some seed ideas, a really rough idea of the way that we wanted the story to go, but we knew we needed the touch that real Marvel writers could provide," explains Pat Lipo, Raven Software's lead gameplay developer. "Man of Action took it and ran with it—they added all sorts of new and interesting things, and added their own feel to it that went above and beyond stuff that we came up with."

"They were looking at this game as not even a comic-book game but very theatrical," adds Lead Artist Brian Pelletier. "It was almost as if we were writing a movie—the pacing, putting the game into acts, how each act was going to end, even cliffhangers leaving the player wondering what was going to happen leading into the next act. I think they created a lot of nice tension for the player and a lot of nice story flow."

SHIRT! BAME!

"One of the biggest things we wanted to focus on as developers—and we're all big X-Men fans here—was to guarantee that players would be able to play the characters in their true environment as personalities and as a team," says Raven's Rob Gee, the project lead for X-Men Legends. "There have been some single-character comic books, like Wolverine, and some mini-series, but they have four or five X-books that feature the team. It's all about these outer characters that bind together to find a common thread. Every character that we feature is involved in the story, and it was vital that we did that as part of the RPG aspect."

To that end, X-Men Legends offers 15 playable heroes; Raven's not ready to reveal all 15 X-Men just yet, but Gee promises "each character we have in the game would be considered a fan favorite." The names confirmed so far: Cyclops, Jean Grey, Storm, Wolverine, Nightcrawler, Gambit, Beast, Colossus, Iceman, Forge, and Psylocke. "We already have psychics in the game, like Jean Grey, so we're not concentrating on Psylocke's mind-control abilities as we are sheer hand-to-hand combat," reveals Christine. "She's the female ninja assassin. She's more melee-based; she has her psychic knife, which is pretty cool."

The game will also feature at least eight Marvel marquee villains, including Mystique, Blob, Juggernaut, Toad, and Magneto.

POWERS MULTIPLIED BY X

In true, customize-to-taste RPG fashion, every character is upgraded individually and flexibly with experience points. For instance, Cyclops' trademark Optic Beam upgrades to Optic Blast, which does extra piercing damage. In addition to three core attacks, each character has a unique Xtreme ability (as the X-Men franchise is the only one that can still get away with using that term), such as Iceman's Freeze Frame, Cyclops' Optic Rage, and Nightcrawler's Blindsight Blitz. Those four superpowers are aided by a few other passive abilities that are no less useful, such as Wolverine's healing factor, Storm's flight, and Cyclops' defense-boosting Leadership. All of those abilities, active and passive, differ based on the character and can be upgraded by the player at will. "Looking at the comics over the 30-plus years, they found really creative ways to use the powers in comics, and that challenged us to make sure we could do that on the fly as opposed to real specific scenarios," explains Gee.



X-Men Legends features distinctive black outlines around its characters. "Comic artists like Joe Madureira and Adam Hughes have this very bold contour outline ink style to their work, and those were two of the people we looked at for style," says Brian Pelletier.



Iceman's powers include the ability to generate a spiky defensive armor of icicles.



Rob Gee says early feedback suggests that X-Men Legends "has the elements that RPGs should have, it has the elements that action games should have, and yet it's something that's a little bit of both but even more."



"Because we're constantly introducing new characters, it stays fresh and new," says Brian Pelletier. "I hope that's something that we can add to this genre—to keep it fresh as it goes and not have it get monotonous."



In a level not shown to the general public at E3, the X-Men travel to the Morlock sewers on a mission to find Gambit—and this time, the often-neutral Morlocks are not in the mood for visitors.

CONTINUED ►



"If I take Jean Grey up against a Sentinel, she's got telepathy, which is not going to do a whole lot of good because he's machine," reasons Blaine Christine. "It reinforces that idea of 'Who do I really want to take on this mission?'"

PSYLOCKE REVEALED!

Shown here for the first time, fan-favorite Psylocke will rely on a blend of martial arts and mental powers, including her deadly psychic knife.



Wolverine's passive Final Word ability lets him come back after a knockout—a nod to his resurrection after being shot in the head in X2.



"We want to be true to the characters," says Rob Goe. "We want them to work in this game environment so that they're all useful."

You can direct any four X-Men at any given time, so mixing and matching powers and heroes is part strategy, part trial and error, and part pleasant surprise. "In past games, you wind up saying, 'What item do I have that I can use to solve this puzzle or get past this obstacle?,'" says Lead Designer Tom Odell. "In our game, it's more 'Which character can I use in combination with other characters or powers to get past this puzzle?'"

What's more, many of those objectives offer multiple solutions. In one mission, the U.S.S. *Arbiter* starts breaking into pieces, and while rescuing crew members, the X-Men must also seal up cracks in the ship to hold it

together. When found, Cyclops can weld them with his Optic Beam, Storm can do the same with her lightning, or Iceman can freeze the gap shut (among other solutions).

That way, players aren't tied to one character or method. And if your party happens to not include any of the "right" people to solve a particular puzzle, extraction points have been provided nearby to enable you to perform a quick switch.

MARVEL TEAM-UP

There's no shortage of action among those puzzles. Playing an early X-Men Legends build on the Xbox, it wasn't hard to find chaos around every corner when navigating

the Morlock tunnels in a Gambit rescue mission (not shown at E). In this particular scenario, the Morlocks are pissed off and attacking anything with an X belt buckle. It's not uncommon to find yourself fighting five or six enemies at a time, some with resistances to specific styles of attack—this makes the need to utilize all your team members even more crucial. You'll want to keep an eye on everyone's health, but you don't need to baby-sit anybody; your teammates take it upon themselves to seek out and defeat nearby enemies unless you press the Ally button (the left thumbstick on the Xbox) to call them to your side. Otherwise, you can control any team member at any time and leave the other three to be the best they are at what they do.

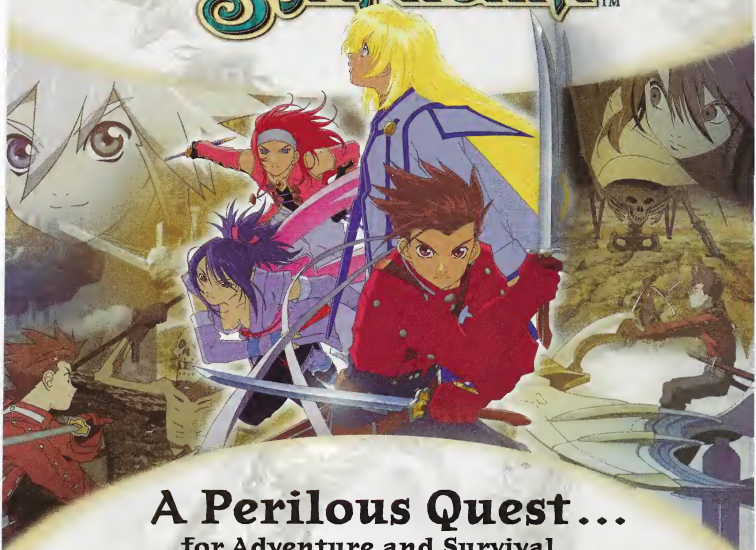
"Raven's A.I. programmer Simon Parkinson has really done some incredible work on getting the A.I. to feel like it is an X-Men team," grins Christine. "It's such a cool feeling to have all that chaos going on all around you—where you're controlling Cyclops, and you can call in air strikes, and you've got multiple superpowers at once. That's the ultimate goal that we were reaching for, and now that we feel we're starting to achieve that, it makes it feel like something that has never been done before and makes it a unique, very cool experience."

"All that chaos" can be manipulated to your advantage. "After you use a superpower, there's a set amount of time where if another superpower is used on that enemy within that amount of time, you get a combo bonus where you get extra experience and extra damage," explains Christine. "Any sort of teamwork involving multiple superpowers can potentially generate a combo."

"And because you've got these three A.I.-controlled characters, you can get a lot of really cool random stuff happening," he continues. "I was playing yesterday, and one of the powers of the characters I was using popped two guys up in the air simultaneously. Immediately I hit the Ally button to call in help, and Iceman shot his freeze beam, so they got frozen in midair. That's awesome! Then I used Cyclops to hit them with an eye beam. You get that kind of stuff occurring randomly, and that's what makes it fun."

CONTINUED ►

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Small Rooms, Big Mess

The environments make it fun, too—especially because the walls, cabinets, crates, and other structures are designed to be destroyed. "What we quickly found was that some of the initial level designs were really restrictive—we had these really tight hallways," explains Christine. "When you've got four superheroes and you're trying to cram as many villains on screen as you can so that they can all do their own fights, suddenly you don't have the space to do that. I think the team's been really good about working around that, coming up with some creative level design. In a lot of the levels, we have destructible walls—so you're firing off optic blasts and throwing enemies around, you start destroying walls, and by the time the battle's done, you're like, 'Wow, there's this cool open environment because I was chuckin' people all over the place!'"

On the incomplete Xbox version we played, control was fairly straightforward. The four compass points of the directional pad correspond to the four X-Men in your team—just tap a direction to switch. Christine describes the targeting system as a "soft lock"—whichever enemy you face is your current target and stays targeted until you choose another in your line of sight. In a game full of frenzied battles with a dozen characters on-screen at once, it works remarkably well.

What If?

Of course, there's one obvious question: If there are four X-Men on the screen, why isn't this a four-player game? "It's very much a story-driven game, and a lot of those games that allow four players at any given time don't have a lot of cinematics or conversation elements," explains Christine. "Also, I don't know that we were ever convinced that we could really nail down a camera that's going to make everybody happy and make it easy to control four players at any given time." "We are prepared to deliver two players, but we're still in progress yet, and we'll see what comes from that," adds Gee. "If anything better comes along, that's great. But we know we can do two, so that's what we're focusing on how to perfect."

"Perfect" is a word that both Raven and Activision are taking very seriously; after nearly four years of expectations, both companies are dedicated to making sure X-Men Legends delivers on its ambitious potential. "I think the challenge for us was to see if we could pull off a team-based RPG that one player can sit down and enjoy playing every X-Man that it provides," says Gee. "I think we took the challenging road, and I think it's really paying off. We're excited about the product—it's been something that we've been reaching for for a long time, and we finally got it."



X-Men Legends should provide a solid 20 to 25 hours of gameplay—likely more, considering how 15 characters add to the replay potential.



Storm fights with a finesse style—"a lot of spin kicks, a lot of flips," explains Blaine Christine—as opposed to Cyclops' straight-up brawling or Colossus' slower but more powerful wrestler-style attacks.



Environments and walls can be destroyed by using powers, fists, or other people—throwing an enemy into a wall might send them through it and open up a new area.



Storm's attacks include Lightning Strike, Whirlwind, Storm Shield, and the Xtreme attack Cyclone Fury, plus Flight, Lightning Fury (adds lightning damage to other attacks), and a few other tricks.



Sorry—there won't be online play for X-Men Legends. "We weren't really willing to simplify or cut down on some of our single-player experience to try to focus on multi-player," says Pat Lipo. "It's the kind of decision you have to make really early on."

Heretics, Mutants, and Jedi

Wait... Raven—the Jedi Outcast guys—doing an RPG? Recent gamers may recognize Raven's name from first-person-shooter/combat games like Soldier of Fortune, Jedi Academy, and the upcoming Quake IV, but old-school players will recall Heretic and Hexen, the revolutionary FPS/RPG hybrids built around the Doom engine. The company's earliest game, 1992's Black Crypt, was a serious fantasy RPG from the ground up. "Raven's roots really are in RPGs; that's how they started out," says Blaine Christine. "Everybody knows them now for shooter stuff, but this is really getting back to their roots." Adds Rob Gee, "This game is kind of an homage to Steve and Brian Raftel because they formed the company basically on a game of Dungeons & Dragons. They played D&D, and that inspired them to make their first game, and that's the founding of Raven. Raven was an RPG character."




"Marvel decided that the Ultimate identity was the look they really wanted," says Rob Gee. "The Ultimate line is a lot more gritty—the feel is a little more adult, a little more severe."



While the playable characters in the game include many classics and fan faves, Rob Gee says, "We didn't use Kitty Pryde because she would break every map we could possibly make."

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The Electronic Entertainment Expo is sort of an electrified version of the Super Bowl. Every May in Los Angeles, the titans of the gaming industry try to outmaneuver and out-hype each other to influence anyone and everyone who has anything to do with interactive entertainment—including you, dear reader. Attending the E3 show are investors who speculate how well a given company's stock will do, retailers who judge how many copies of a game they might have to order, and the press who scramble to cover every worthwhile game shown. If it sounds like E3 is a big mass of stress and loud music laced with propaganda, that's because it is. Luckily, *GamePro* has once again managed to sift through the chaos and crafted this handy guide to the hottest and most noteworthy games and happenings of the show.

GamePro definition

E3 Showstopper (i-thre-shō-stap-er) n.

- 1: A game or system shown at the 2004 E3 show that impresses the *GamePro* editors so much that it stops the show and demands immediate attention.
- 2: Said game or hardware must be playable or actual running software; video-only footage gets a separate award.

CONTINUED ►

Double Vision

games with "2" in the title!
Expo—E³ for short—offered



1 Nintendo DS/Sony PSP (tie)

Fanboys can argue 'til their faces are blue about which is better, but the Nintendo DS and Sony PSP are truly different devices that are going to have their own distinct core audiences. It's clear that the DS will still skew younger, much like the GBA SP, and the PSP is going to get swallowed up by the older, gadget-loving crowd. Take a closer look.



In the Metroid demo, players moved Samus around with the directional pad but shot and made sharp turns with the stylus.

Nintendo DS

Two Screens, No Waiting

The design, name, and software aren't yet final, but there were plenty of tech demos and pseudogames on display, all hinting at the new ways gamers will play with the clamshell-style, twin-screened DS. Leading the pack was a Mario 64-ish romp that allowed you to view any part of the world map on the lower screen to scout for Stars by tapping on it with your finger or stylus. The upper screen featured Mario and friends jumping and generally frolicking around in 3D. In contrast, a first-person version of Metroid used the lower portion for the main action and the top half as an ever-present map. (During the Nintendo press conference, both screens were used as one very tall screen to present an impressive-looking Samus.) The coolest use of the touch screen was a WarioWare title that enabled you to interact in the same manic way as in the GBA game except you used the stylus to chop, trap, and move objects on the screen.

Developer's System

Other software on hand demonstrated how sensitive the touch screen is as well as new ways to communicate with friends not only via wireless text messaging but also through zapping drawings to them. Nintendo mentioned that the DS could also stand for "Developer's System" because it will allow a new way for creators to express themselves. Judging by some preliminary third-party concepts, the possibilities are quite vast. The most striking example was a Yu-Gi-Oh mockup from Konami that offered a great example of how players can interact with cards on the lower, touchable screen and watch the resulting action on the top one.

Nintendo announced that the DS will ship by the end of this year in both Japan and the U.S. at an affordable price (GamePro estimates as low as \$149 but no higher than \$199). You'll be able to touch the future, very soon without destroying your wallet.—Tokyo Drifter

Sony PSP

PlayStation Portable

While the Nintendo DS is exciting because of its unusual gaming potential, the Sony PSP is a straight-up advancement of raw, portable power. The list of features reads like a geek wish list, starting with PlayStation 2-level horsepower, a large widescreen display, and a new optical-based media, UMD, with enough storage capacity to deliver massive games and full-length movies. The design of the handheld is elegant and high-tech with rounded edges, a high-gloss black finish, and a solid, durable feel. Videos of Hollywood films and game footage ran on the systems on the show floor, demonstrating the clarity of the screen. Although interaction with some of the content was limited and simulated, the unit seems perfectly capable of delivering a comfortable experience no matter what you use it for.



High Rollers

No price point was announced, but no one expects this sucker to be very cheap. A suggested retail similar to first-run PS2 consoles (\$299) is likely when the PSP launches by the end of this year in Japan and early 2005 in the U.S. When the unit does hit stores, look for a massive software library filled with specialized versions of PS2 favorites like *Gran Turismo Mobile*, *Need for Speed Underground*, *NBA Street*, and *Tiger Woods PGA Tour Golf*. Also look for older classics to return like Capcom's *Darkstalkers* and Sony's own *MediEvil*. In the "brand-new" category, you can expect *Metal Gear Acid* and an original *Ridge Racer* entry.

The PSP's applications and expansion possibilities beyond gaming have not yet been fully explained, but its potential as a music and movie playback device (Square Enix's *Final Fantasy Advent Children*, will be available on DVD and UMD) is definitely an area that distinguishes it from the DS.—TD

CONTINUED ►



UMD games and movies will come in a slim case roughly two-thirds the size of a standard DVD box. All UMDs will be protected by a key-like disc container.

2 Resident Evil 4



Yes, we've all played our fair share of sequels, and few series have served up as many as Resident Evil. So what makes Resident Evil 4 a top Showstopper? Out of all the games at E3, RE4 was the one that reinvented itself thoroughly—so much so that even the *GamePro* editors who don't like the RE series stopped for a play...and they loved every second of it.

"No. They're different. They aren't zombies..."

For starters, Resident Evil 4 is drop-dead gorgeous. The pre-rendered atmospheres of past games are history as the visual scheme now consists of a semi-first-person view. The grainy visuals enhance feelings of dread, and there's plenty of detail to be found, right down to chunks of gray matter that splatter across the screen when a shotgun blast is delivered at point-blank range.

Story-wise, forget Umbrella: The chemical conglomerate has been shut down by the government, and there's nary a zombie to be found in RE4. In fact, the only thing connecting RE4 to other games in the series is Leon Kennedy, who was one of the survivors from Resident Evil 2. It's six years after Raccoon City was nuked off the face of the Earth (as recounted in Resident Evil 3: Nemesis), and Leon is an agent assigned to protect the president's daughter, Ashley. Yet the little girl is quickly kidnapped, and Leon begins his search in Europe. As preceding previews have illustrated, you start by taking on psychotic villagers, but what these screens don't show you is what happens later in the game. Leon eventually stumbles across a castle that's populated by fire-breathing monks and other dangers. Things become even more difficult: When Leon finds Ashley, he must successfully keep her from harm's way as she takes damage. If Ashley is grabbed and carried away, Leon must carefully shoot her assailant in the leg; if an attacker gets too close, she instinctively ducks when Leon draws his gun. Leon's arsenal includes a shotgun, revolver, hand grenades, rocket launcher, and scope rifle—among others.

"I thought the nightmares were over..."

One notable key technique is the "action-button system." At key points during the game, the player is prompted to press the A button, and, depending on the situation, Leon performs a certain action, ranging from jumping out a window to pushing a heavy object against a door to slow advancing enemies. The system lends a nice touch of spontaneity and unpredictability, and it makes Leon a more formidable character when he's unarmed.

There's a lot more to be said about Resident Evil 4, and based on what was shown, this could be the scariest entry in the series yet. And yes, it's only on the GameCube. —Major Mike

Developed by and published by Capcom ■ Target pulcas: date: November

CONTINUED ►



3 Final Fantasy XII

FF The big shocker here: It's not just a re-tread of the last couple of games. While almost everyone expected just another Final Fantasy X or X-2, showgoers who stopped to actually play this game found that something had truly, fundamentally changed: the battle system. Chalk it up to the influence of Final Fantasy Tactics and FFT Advance designer Yasunori Matsuno, who tells us that one of the things he most dislikes in other RPGs is when you're not given a choice.

First off, there are no more random encounters(!). Every enemy is visible as you wander through the world (viewable from any angle now that the camera's mapped to the control stick), and combat takes place in real time ("active time" if you prefer the ol' Square term) right there on the map without loading up a separate battle screen. You can position characters (three are out at a time) as you see fit and move about freely as you battle—and, what's more, battles don't take all day! It plays a bit like Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic, and the Final Fantasy XI influence is crystal clear (Matsuno's favorite FFXI enemy, the Mandragora, even makes an appearance).

Matsuno also says that there's not going to be a "straightforward" XP and level-up system, allowing you to totally customize your characters as you see fit without a crazy sphere grid, with magic types (yes, summoning will return) divided into more diverse color groups (including "green"). Granted, some people are gonna hate these changes—when you mess with FF, people notice—but grats go to Square Enix for having the nerve to shake things up.—*Star Dingo*

■ Developed and published by Square Enix ■ Target release date: 2005



E3 from The Hip

Conspicuous No-Shows

Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas, Spider-Man 2, The Warriors, Capcom Fighting Jam



Best Trailers

The Legend of Zelda, Tekken 5, The Legend of Zelda, Marc Ecko's Getting On, The Legend of Zelda

Games You Can't Appreciate Properly On a Noisy Show Floor

Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic II: The Sith Wars, Silent Hill 4: The Room, Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater

Just Release It Already

Fable, Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater, StarCraft: Ghost, Gran Turismo 4



Looks Good, Looks Early—Show Us More

Devil May Cry 3, Kingdom Hearts II



Seen It, Loved It, Moved On

Vampire: The Masquerade—Bloodlines, EverQuest II

Disappointments

The Matrix Online, Drive3r

Most Improved

Star Fox, Conker: Live & Reloaded

4 Halo 2

X Chances are one in three readers have their eyebrows up in alarm that Halo 2 wasn't ranked highest in our cavalcade of Showstoppers. That's okay; we can explain in a single phrase: predictably awesome. Knowing Bungie's track record, having played through the first Halo, having followed every rumor and advance screen shot on the sequel...did anybody not expect Halo 2 to be delicious? Of course not. So when hands-on time was finally allocated and we got to try a game of single-fight CTF for ourselves, the result was...predictably awesome.



Halo 2 in playable form lives up to the expectations of every gamer. The level was Zanzibar, a sandy fortress with multiple entryways and crumbling walls. Hijacking occupied vehicles is easy, brutal, and alarmingly fast; just tap X in front of or behind a Ghost, and the driver pops out violently. The new rocket-launching Warthog is a sweet improvement; rockets can now lock on to targets and follow them for a homing surprise.

Wielding two weapons at once is intuitive and *very macho*. Each trigger fires that hand's weapon—the left-hand weapon is fired with the L trigger; the R trigger, as normal, fires your right-hand weapon. When wielding two weapons, you cannot throw grenades, so it's something of a strategic decision as to whether you want to Woo your enemies. Better still is the badass Elite energy sword, which any player can now wield.

Since the game's biggest features were announced and demonstrated last year, it wasn't really a surprise to see that Halo 2, with another year of polish, was even further along the path to incredible. Mark your calendars for November 9 and start counting off the days—you won't be doing anything but playing Halo 2 after it's released. But, again, you could have predicted that, too.—*Dan Eddins*

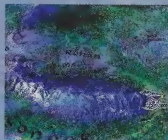
■ Developed by Bungie ■ Published by Microsoft ■ Target release date: November



5 The Lord of the Rings: The Battle For Middle-Earth



The Lord of the Rings: The Battle for Middle-Earth



has been on the radar for some time now, but this showing marks the first time the game engine driving this RTS has been revealed—and boy, was the wait worth it. It seems certain that the innovations developer EA LA (the team behind the Command & Conquer series) has implemented in BFME will be copied in the years to come, starting with the “no interface” approach to controlling the action.



That means no huge bar with inventories or options taking up a third of the screen—just click on the location or units you want to interact with, and the related actions pop up in a radial menu. The other huge leap



is the “emotions” that govern unit behavior: Orcs and humans within sight of each other will shout and rile themselves preparing for battle, then cheer if victorious in the skirmish. Another example witnessed was an Ent catching on fire and then, like any sane sentient creature, panicking and running for the nearest body of water. If he was able to put himself out, he came back very, very upset. A.I. elements like this are incorporated into every unit in the game.

Sealing the deal as a worthy E3 Showstopper were the stunning visuals, fluid character animation, and a regal orchestral score. Excellent.—TD

■ Developed by EA LA ■ Published by EA Games
■ Target release date: Fall 2004

Pleasant Surprise Fight Club



Best Moment

Shigeru Miyamoto strikes a pose with Link's sword and shield after the surprise unveiling of The Legend of Zelda trailer

Hottest Genre Buzzword “Action/RPG”



Second Hottest Genre Buzzword “WWII shooter”

Best Press Kit

Namco's slipcovered DVD/CD set, full of screens, info, and game trailers



Weirdest Games

Git On Da Mic, Chulip



Best Irony

Use of Apple laptop to help run Microsoft's press conference

Best Game Title

Chrome: Gold Edition

Best Chair

White swivel recliners, Halo 2 theater

6 Half-Life 2



Less is more...right? To be honest, we weren't all that saddened when Valve's

demo of Half-Life 2 this year didn't really show us anything we didn't already know. The world was convinced back when the developer rolled it out in 2003, and, well, spoilers suck. The few tailored-to-fease playable areas did demonstrate, however, that Valve's gift of hyper-immersive sci-fi storytelling wasn't just a fluke as Gordon wandered through the Orwellian nightmare of City 17 as confused, bewildered, and awestruck as the gaming geeks participating in the demo.

Valve's in-theaters-only presentation was interesting in that it showed off examples of what play-testers were doing with the game's extraordinary physics engine—hurling couches across floors to crush enemies against dirty walls, using the game's super-spiffy gravity gun to pull themselves out of precarious situations: more proof that the unscripted insanity we were hoping would be in the game actually is in the game after all. The areas they showed—a seaside ride in a dune buggy avoiding roller-mines, a brief glimpse of “fast zombies” in a graveyard with a crazy priest, and a hovercraft skimming across a grimy, littered pond being bombarded by helicopters—didn't give away a single bit of story, but they did teach us one thing: Physics is fun, kids. Swear to God. Oh, and good news for all you multiplayer fans: All of the old Half-Life games (Counter-Strike, Day of Defeat, Team Fortress) are being ported to Source, meaning you'll be able to play all your old faves in shiny new clothes the day the game ships. Whenever that is.—SD

■ Developed by Valve ■ Published by Sierra ■ Target release date: Who knows?



CONTINUED ►



7 The Movies

Just like with the movies, The Movies sounds like one of those "high concept" projects that often turns out to be long on expectation and short on execution. But Lionhead Studios is no hack when it comes to "god" games, and one thing E3 revealed is that The Movies is looking better and better.

The game spans the history of film from 1900 to 2010, so you can explore film styles and genres past, present, and future. Whether you want to rerun Louis B. Mayer's movie mogul strategies, create like a young Steven Spielberg, or explore new concepts like the next Ang Lee (or even the next Spike Lee), The Movies has it all. The E3 presentation, nicely demonstrated how you focus on three aspects of the movie business: running your studio, wrangling your movie stars, and actually making movies for mini-movies, as these will be called). But even before you start rolling the cameras, you can dive into all aspects of building, maintaining, and promoting a major motion picture operation, including the hiring and firing of talent.

Developing movie stars seriously drifts into Sims territory. At E3, you could create the appearance of your next superstar from wardrobe right down to strategically placed moles. Of course, if all the lights and glitter go to their heads, your star might become a prima donna throwing temper tantrums or showing up drunk at the set.

Naturally, the ultimate test (and thrill) will be creating your mini-movies. Activision was even promoting the idea of eventually posting said masterpieces online. After exploring The Movies at E3, I'm ready for my close-up, Mr. DeMille.—*Brother Buzz*

■ Developed by Lionhead Studios
■ Published by Activision ■ Target release date: October

8 Killzone

One of the game's creators has described Killzone as "a first-person babysitter." But both the game's developer, Guerrilla, and publisher, Sony, are quick to point out that Killzone is also an intense squad-based first-person shooter with enough smart A.I. that you'll forget you're being nursed by others.

What set Killzone apart from the rest of the combat games at E3 was its blazing gunplay in a tale of futuristic combat. Yes, you have a team that follows you, but that's essentially it. Very limited control over the team means more focus on essential stuff like battling waves of glowing-red-eyed soldiers out to crush your rebellion. The closest things to teamwork are the yells and observations your comrades direct toward you so you have a better idea of how to tackle the battlefield.

An early demo of Killzone showcased why it may be the Halo for the PlayStation 2. Tight controls that enabled you to switch between primary and secondary weapons felt right on target. The best part, however, was the amount of detail the game displayed. It's a dark and gritty world full of war-torn structures and harsh environments—perfect for the next generation of first-person combat.—*Four-Eyed Dragon*

■ Developed by Guerrilla Games
■ Published by Sony ■ Target release date: Winter 2004



Best Giveaway

Nintendo's Timbuk2 messenger bags from the press conference

Worst Monitors

BenQ 20" LCD TVs



Best EyeToy Game

AntiGrav

Best Bongo Drum Game

Dankey Kong: Jungle Beat

Only Other

Bongo Drum Game

Dankey Konga



Overheard Quote

Of the Show

"Isn't Phantom just another word for vaporware?"



Buggiest Demo

Half-Life 2, which crashed at the BIOS screen

Second Buggiest Demo

Fear Factor's tank of cockroaches



Loudest Booth

Tie: EA's video wall/Logitech's DJ (104 decibels)

Quietest Booth

Tie: Everything in Kentia Hall

9



Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater

PE Once again, Konami wowed audiences with the longest trailer yet for *Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater*, and it revealed more of the game's play mechanics and narrative. While in the jungle during the 1960s Cold War, Snake must infiltrate a heavily guarded Russian base and trap and store his own food to maintain his stamina (he can also leave poisoned rations for enemies to use). There's more emphasis on stealth this time around via various camouflage schemes, and Snake has a host of new hand-to-hand fighting moves, too. You can also count on a series of cut-scenes peppered with thoughtful dialogue.—*MM*

■ Developed by KCEI ■ Published by Konami ■ Target release date: November

10



God of War

PE Greek mythology gets the bloody, gory treatment with this action/adventure title from some of the folks who brought you *Twisted Metal*. Playing as ex-Spartan soldier Kratos, your task is to find Pandora's Box—the only thing that can destroy the titular Ares. Yet the path to the goal is wrought with hazards and enemies that range from booby traps and puzzles to battles with minotaurs and the stone-gazing Medusa (whose trophy head you can use to petrify enemies). *God of War* has a wide variety of gameplay techniques, including platform-hopping, puzzle-solving, hand-to-hand combo-based fighting, and reflex-taxing rapid-button-press mechanics...not to mention serious M-rated content.—*MM*

■ Developed by SCEA Santa Monica ■ Published by Sony
■ Target release date: First Quarter 2005

11



Metroid Prime 2: Echoes

CS Under the vigilant eye of Nintendo, Retro Studios is poised to serve up another classic Metroid adventure. Following the downfall of the Space Pirates, Samus finds herself caught in an interdimensional battle between Light and Dark worlds created by a Phaeton meteor striking the planet Aether. You not only have to contend with Space Pirate remnants but also a spiderlike Dark race called the Ing. New for the series is a four-player split-screen multiplayer (no LAN) that integrates the lock-on and boost ball mechanics; announced modes include deathmatch and a Bounty mode that has players collect coins by killing others. With stunning visuals, dimensional travel, and new Light and Dark weapon mechanics, don't expect the standard hackneyed sequel.—*Funky Zealot*

■ Developed by Retro Studios ■ Published by Nintendo
■ Target release date: Winter 2004

12



Doom 3

X Microsoft's pre-show press conference offered a sneak video peek at *Doom 3*, which wasn't very revealing aside from the excruciatingly slow frame rate and lots of pretty renders. Running on the show floor, however, the playable demo of *Doom 3* told a much more encouraging story—the game just sizzled. This is one game that skillfully uses a flashlight to help search and destroy the evil you must face in the game—enemies lurk in every corner, and seeking them out leaves you armed with, well, only a flashlight. Even if it was just one playable level, *Doom 3* certainly captivated and surprised many at the show and only whetted our appetite for even more. Although there isn't an official release date, let's hope by this fall we'll all be kicking a little demon ass.—*FED*

■ Developed by Vicarious Visions/Id Software
■ Published by Activision ■ Target release date: To be determined

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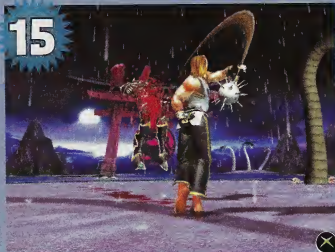


Pikmin 2

P Shigeru Miyamoto's delightfully charming syncretism of exploration and strategy fell shy of the perfect mark due to two complaints: It was too easy and too short. So its sequel is doing away with the 15-minute-a-day time limit, and its overall design will be more complex. Reprising the role of Captain Olimar, you'll be joined by a fellow space traveler named Louie and two new types of Pikmin when you return to the same planet of the first game in search of hidden treasure. In addition to crisper textures and more detailed and challenging environments, areas and dungeons will randomly generate, giving the game more replay value than the first. What we're most excited about, though, is playing with or against a friend via split-screen.—*Iron Monkey*

■ Developed and published by Nintendo ■ Target release date: August

15



Mortal Kombat: Deception

P Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance gave the long-running fighting franchise a much-needed facelift with a brand-new fighting and graphics engine. Deception beefs up both those attributes with two Fatalities per character, multitiered fighting stages, melee weapons, and online play. The fighting game alone would be enough, but Deception adds a host of mini-games that should appeal to nonfighters. The RPGish Konquest mode lets you build up a character through training and exploration; Chess Kombat mode is a strategy game in which you move characters around the board, and instead of "taking" a place, you fight it out; and the very surprising Puzzle Kombat is as addicting as Puzzle Fighter was as super-deformed MK characters battle for puzzle supremacy. Finish him!—*MM*

■ Developed and published by Midway ■ Target release date: October

14



Call of Duty: Finest Hour

P Most PC players have experienced Call of Duty's jaw-dropping take on WWII shooters. Its key? Everything is alive—nobody fights the war alone, and as you scramble to complete your goals, the fighting carries on, guns chattering and planes crashing as the war escalates all around you. Amazingly, Spark has pulled it off as the PS2 demo of the franchise's first console-only title, Finest Hour, amply showed.

While the demo level was Stalingrad 1942, that scenario is the only one shared between the console game and its PC brother. However, the all-important sense of chaos—and living and fighting through it—was very much in place (surprisingly!). At a crowded show with plenty of war games on display, Finest Hour left its witnesses...shell-shocked.—*DE*

■ Developed by Spark Unlimited

■ Published by Activision ■ Target release date: Fall 2004

16



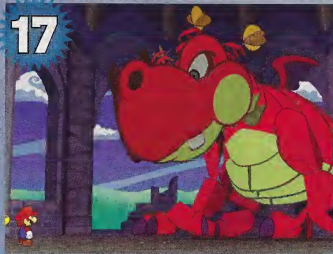
Destroy All Humans

P So how cool is Destroy All Humans going to be? Well, apart from the fact that Pandemic Studios is going through great pains to re-create the 1950s America in the grip of Cold War paranoia, it is also giving you free roam to mind-read, brainwash, and body-snatch any human you encounter as well as telepathically toss cars, cops, crates, and cows. As a little blue man who definitely doesn't come in peace, you also get a massive arsenal of space-invading weapons and a nifty jetpack. And if you ever get the urge to cause wholesale devastation, you can hop into your flying saucer, roast entire city blocks with your death ray, and go into stealth mode when the military shows up. That's pretty damn cool.—*IM*

■ Developed by Pandemic Studios

■ Published by THQ ■ Target release date: Spring 2005

17



Paper Mario 2

CE Paper Mario 2 takes the paper concept further than its predecessor. You can now fold Mario into different shapes, such as paper airplanes, to reach far-off areas or flatten yourself to slide through cracks and under doors. The combat system is much more fun as battling takes place in front of an audience; the better you fight, the more your audience grows and the faster your special ability meter fills, while nailing perfectly timed split-second mini-games lets you perform super moves. On the show floor, the game played great and looked absolutely stunning, and even without the bonus stories that let you play Super Mario Bros. from the perspective of Bowser and Princess Peach, Nintendo's got the makings of yet another classic.—*IM*

■ Developed and published by Nintendo ■ Target release date: October

19



Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell 3 (working title)

PE X CE Like you, we're also remarking on how soon another Splinter Cell game will be released. It may seem that Ubisoft is making its high-profile series in short order, but a demo of this new stealth adventure can easily make you retract those preconceived notions. Sneaking around is still the main menu, but Sam is now rewarded with a greater arsenal of close-combat moves, including (finally) knife attacks. And if you thought Pandora Tomorrow's multiplayer game was innovative, think again. The next round of online teamwork involves two spies infiltrating areas where it's necessary to help each other advance.—*FED*

■ Developed by Ubisoft Montreal ■ Published by Ubisoft
■ Target release date: Winter 2004

18



Burnout 3

PE X Burnout 3's E3 (and EA) debut showed a dramatic upgrade to this arcade racing franchise's visuals and gameplay. Granted, the elements that define the series have returned—notably the spectacular, visceral wrecks—but because you're now rewarded for sending opponents spinning out of control and into walls, the potential for chaos is greater than ever. Six players can finally smash and burn online (on the PS2) using over 70 vehicles on 40 tracks. The pace is even faster than Burnout 2's, and the Crash mode is larger than ever. In other words, bring your own seatbelt—Burnout 3's putting you through the windshield. And you're gonna like it, dammit.—*DE*

■ Developed by Criterion ■ Published by EA Games ■ Target release date: Fall 2004

20



25 to Life

PE X Imagine SOCOM with police and gangs in place of soldiers, and you have the general idea of 25 to Life. The fact that each side has its unique strengths, weaknesses, and style ingrained into the gameplay gives the game real potential in a crowded genre. Single-player mode puts you in the alternating shoes of both sides, but the online portion is the big draw. Sixteen-player support for the PS2 and Xbox is a good start, but having unique rewards for doing well is the potentially addictive hook. Cops need to arrest thugs to climb the ranks, and thugs can show wannabes how OG they are with all the threads and gear they've won.—*TD*

■ Developed by HWY 1 Productions ■ Published by Eidos Interactive
■ Target release date: Spring 2005

THE HERO RETURNS

WITH A CROSS-PLATFORM SEQUEL AND A PS2 PORT IN THE WORKS, VIEWTIFUL JOE IS SET FOR AN ALL-OUT ASSAULT ON BOTH THE GAMECUBE AND THE PLAYSTATION 2.

BY IRON MONKEY

At a time when it seemed like almost every game coming out was a relish, remake, or lackluster franchise offering, gamers needed something like last year's superb ode to 1970s Japanese TV heroes and American comic books: Viewtiful Joe, an aesthetically brilliant amalgamation of old-school side-scrolling platformers and modern technological wizardry. The game, in which a teenaged Walter Mitty type becomes a masked superhero and is hurled into a celluloid wonderland to rescue his kidnapped girlfriend, boasted wildly gorgeous art direction, memorable characters, arcade gameplay, and honest-to-goodness charm. It was cleverly designed and refreshingly challenging, while the manga-esque, pseudo two-dimensional animation and the frenetic action both threatened to burst from the screen and embed themselves into your frontal lobe.

The game was also rare in that it left you thoroughly drained, yet immediately wanting more once you finished it. Thankfully, Capcom not only has a follow-up in the works for both the GameCube and the PlayStation 2, but it's also porting the original game to the PlayStation 2, a one-two combination that has fans, both longtime and soon-to-be, damn excited.

LOOKING VIEWTIFUL ON THE PS2

Since the first game was a GameCube exclusive, PlayStation 2 owners missed out on some Viewtiful lovin'. In a move that was not too surprising considering the disappointing sales Viewtiful Joe received despite its overwhelming critical acclaim, Capcom has announced that the henشين hero will kick ass and take names on the PS2 in the near future. "I wanted more people to get a chance to play the game," explains Producer Atsushi Inaba. "I'm really proud of it and was hoping the company would let me release it on the PS2 so more gamers could see the great game that we created." Wish granted. Rejoice, PlayStation 2 gamers—you're in for a wild ride.

The PlayStation 2 release of Viewtiful Joe will contain two notable new features: an all-new Easy mode and an unlockable character who, like Joe, one time redefined the meaning of the word "cool" in games—Dante from Devil May Cry. The choice to include such a gritty character in a candy-pop comic world may seem odd, but it's actually quite fitting.

"Since [Hideki] Kamiya directed both Devil May Cry and Viewtiful Joe, the idea of having a serious character like Dante in a comical world sounded fun, so we decided to include him in the game," explains Inaba. Dante will, of course, come armed with his signature guns, and it will be interesting to see how they are used in Viewtiful Joe. When asked who would win in a bout of fistcuffs between the two heroes, Inaba offers his prediction: "In Joe's world, Joe would win. But if we throw Joe into the Devil May Cry world, yikes! I would fear for Joe's life!"

SYLVIA A GO-GO

Superheroes never have just one adventure, and if you played Viewtiful Joe until the end (no small feat), you were treated to a tantalizing preview of things to come. And you were right—a sequel is in the works. But how do you improve on something so, well, perfect? By focusing on what things the seminal first game did right and expanding on them. With more surreal locations, more visual effects superpowers, and a slew of new enemies and challenges, Inaba and Director Masaaki Yamada are in the process of crafting a logical and exciting progression of the previous game.

Viewtiful Joe 2 picks up where the first game left off with a new evil organization coming from outer space to threaten the peaceful existence of the movie world that



The King of Cool



"Since [Hideki] Kamiya directed both Devil May Cry and Viewtiful Joe, the idea of having a serious character like Dante in a comical world sounded fun, so we decided to include him in the game," explains Inaba. Dante will, of course, come armed with his signature guns, and it will be interesting to see how they are used in Viewtiful Joe. When asked who would win in a bout of fistcuffs between the two heroes, Inaba offers his prediction: "In Joe's world, Joe would win. But if we throw Joe into the Devil May Cry world, yikes! I would fear for Joe's life!"

SYLVIA A GO-GO

Superheroes never have just one adventure, and if you played Viewtiful Joe until the end (no small feat), you were treated to a tantalizing preview of things to come. And you were right—a sequel is in the works. But how do you improve on something so, well, perfect? By focusing on what things the seminal first game did right and expanding on them. With more surreal locations, more visual effects superpowers, and a slew of new enemies and challenges, Inaba and Director Masaaki Yamada are in the process of crafting a logical and exciting progression of the previous game.

Viewtiful Joe 2 picks up where the first game left off with a new evil organization coming from outer space to threaten the peaceful existence of the movie world that



Joe's main squeeze from the first game, Sylvia, is now a playable character with her own story line.

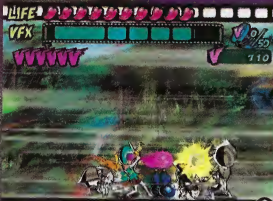
Joe fought tooth and nail to save. Joe, of course, is also back in action, only this time you'll be able to play as another character from the game's beginning—and if you paid attention to the first game's ending, you should already have an idea of who it is. Relegated to prized-object status the first time around, Joe's girlfriend, Sylvia, is now playable, and she's armed with pom-poms and a cool retro-style ray gun that can attack from far distances. In addition, both characters will have a unique story line and dialogue.

But if playing as a ray gun-wielding super cheerleader doesn't float your boat (although why wouldn't it?), the titular hero has a few new tricks up his sleeve. Joe's arsenal of visual effects superpowers will be enhanced with new attributes, while brand-new ones will be introduced, including Replay and Risk and Return. Inaba explains how the new Replay power works during combat: "When activated, three 'Replay' freeze frames of your character will hit the enemy one after the other, repeating whichever move you just executed, for three times the damage."

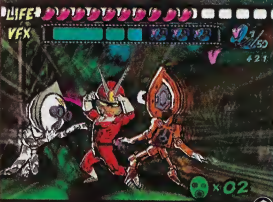
However, Inaba warns that the new ability bears a risky price. "If you get hit while in Replay mode, you incur three times the amount of damage." Also returning is Joe's super-ride, Six Machine, which plays a much larger role in the story than in the original. In the sequel, it will be able to transform into a submarine, a drilling machine, a race car, and even a bazooka, depending on the challenges at hand.



These mysterious freaky-funkies are but a few of the 40-plus enemy types you'll encounter.



Superpowers will also take effect on Sylvia's ray gun. Slowing down time allows her to dish out more damage to foes.



A hero with style is never too busy kicking evil's ass to strike a pose.



Time your dodges right, and enemies will be unintentionally stunned, leaving them vulnerable to your attacks.



In addition to new powers, old powers like Mach Speed will evolve.

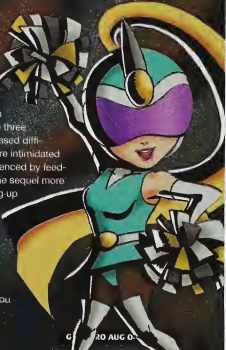


In the right hands, pom-poms can be deadly weapons.

HENSHIN AGAIN

One thing that made Joe shine was its cleverly designed stages and puzzles, and the sequel's combination of longer stages based on more movie themes, new challenges, and new powers will offer more complex challenges than before. New types of puzzles will be designed in such ways that old powers, new powers, and any combination thereof will be needed to solve them. For example, when a volcano erupts in Dino Park, a huge boulder lands on top of a switch, causing a bridge you need to cross to rise. Only by slowing down time and upcutting the rock can you send it aloft long enough to run underneath and across the now-crossable bridge. Later on in the same level is a bolted door; its unlocking mechanism can be activated only by using Replay to strike three sections at precisely the same time. This increased difficulty may not bode so well for players who were intimidated by the first game's difficulty, but Capcom, influenced by feedback from the first adventure, will be making the sequel more accessible for casual players while still ramping up the level of challenge for seasoned gamers.

While a specific launch date hasn't been locked down, Capcom's looking for a release by year's end, and the work it's putting into the sequel promises to meet, if not exceed, the expectations of fans as well as rope in newcomers. And with the PS2 port looming around the same time, hero-ness will be with you like never before.



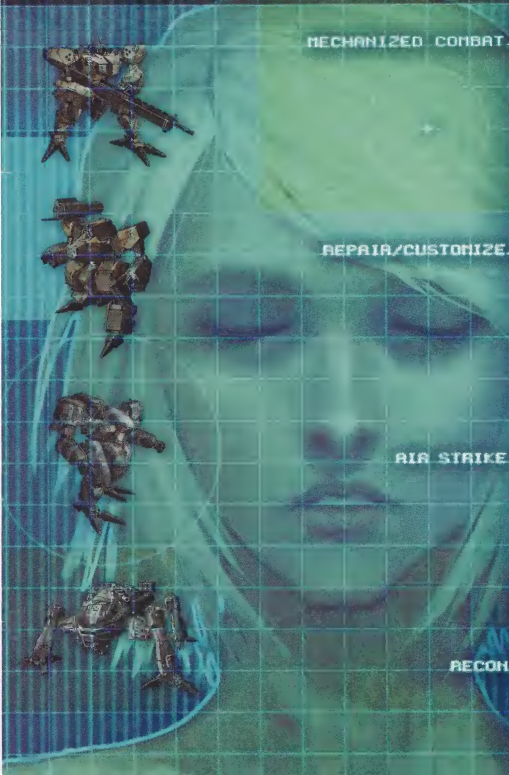
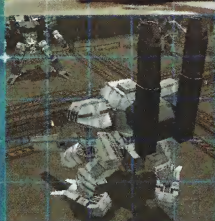
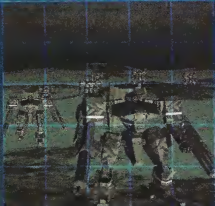
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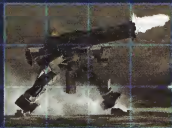
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GoldenEye: Rogue Agent



While the name *GoldenEye* instantly conjures up fond memories of 64-bit blasting in the N64 megahit, EA has been quick to point out that *GoldenEye: Rogue Agent* is not a sequel to the 1997 fan favorite—at least not directly. Whereas Rare's *GoldenEye 007* was based on the movie of the same name, *Rogue Agent* is an entirely new and unrelated adventure that pits the armies of seminal Bond bad guys Dr. No and Auric Goldfinger against one another in an all-out war for supremacy in the super-criminal underworld.

The Man with the Golden Eye

You play a young, dark-minded "double-0" agent in search of a new place to ply your trade after being expelled from M16 for reckless brutality. Not being one to let a *golden* opportunity pass you by, you accept Goldfinger's recruitment offer and join his evil elite, but quickly lose an eye in combat with Dr. No's henchmen. Goldfinger's technicians replace your missing peeper with a gold-hued, synthetic eye with special capabilities, thereby earning you the name "GoldenEye."

Though the events in *Rogue Agent* all take place within the James Bond universe, 007 himself plays a very minor role in this spy story. Instead, you can expect to see a host of infamous Bond film villains like Xenia Onatopp, Oddjob, Francisco Scaramanga, and, of course, Pussy Galore. And thanks to the time-warping powers of fiction, ancient Bond baddies like Dr. No and Goldfinger will appear just as they did when they first graced cinema screens nearly 40 years ago despite *Rogue Agent*'s 21st-century setting (which is kinda how you explain why James Bond doesn't look 80 years old today).

A View to a Kill

Although *Rogue Agent* may not be a true sequel, the developers at EA are well aware of the legacy inherited by any first-person-shooter game bold enough to put "GoldenEye" in the title and are taking care to ensure that the hallowed name of the primogenitor of great console shooters not be sullied in any way. *Rogue Agent* will include a complete story mode that can be played either cooperatively or alone (à la *Halo* or *Time Splitters*) and a multifaceted multiplayer mode with all the usual trimmings. In addition to split-screen variations of deathmatch and competitive mission-based games, *Rogue Agent* will support full online play for the PS2 and Xbox (with optional 16-player offline system link play exclusive to the Xbox).

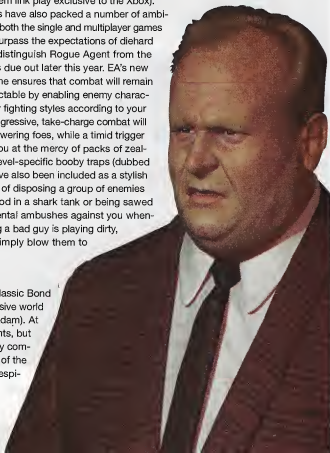
The developers have also packed a number of ambitious features into both the single and multiplayer games in an attempt to surpass the expectations of diehard fans and further distinguish *Rogue Agent* from the flood of FPS titles due out later this year. EA's new "E.V.I.L." A.I. engine ensures that combat will remain fresh and unpredictable by enabling enemy characters to adjust their fighting styles according to your own methods—aggressive, take-charge combat will intimidate your cowering foes, while a timid trigger finger will leave you at the mercy of packs of zealous henchmen. Level-specific booby traps (dubbed "Death Traps") have also been included as a stylish and clever means of disposing a group of enemies

with several traps coming straight out of famous film scenes (like becoming fish food in a shark tank or being sawed in half by a laser). But beware as your foes will not hesitate to use these environmental ambushes against you whenever possible (they don't call it "E.V.I.L." A.I. for nothing). And as half the fun of being a bad guy is playing dirty, you can take any enemy character hostage and use them as a human shield or simply blow them to kingdom come with your dual weapon-wielding ability.

For Golden Eyes Only

In typical EA fashion, no expense has been spared in capturing the essence of the classic Bond villains as a number of notable Hollywood talents have been hired to create the immersive world of *Rogue Agent* (including Academy Award-winning production designer Sir Ken Adam). At present, only Dame Judi Dench as M has been confirmed on the roster of vocal talents, but further casting choices will be revealed in the months to come. If EA can successfully combine the cinematic quality of *The Lord of the Rings* games with the slick spy stylings of the Bond universe (as it did in this year's *Everything or Nothing*), then FPS fans and evil espionage enthusiasts will have one more killer title to keep an eye on this fall.—Bones

■ First Look ■ Developed by EA LA ■ Published by EA Games ■ Target release date: Fall 2004



Test Drive: Eve of Destruction

PE The current trend in automotive gaming isn't too tough to discern: pretty cars, pretty women, and high-speed races in astronomically priced vehicles. Test Drive: Eve of Destruction from Monster Games hopes to buck this flamboyant fad by



reintroducing gamers to the joys of broken glass and bent metal in this death-defying destruction derby-style "racer." In Eve of Destruction, eliminating your opponents is just as important as fast driving (if not more so) as winning races depends more on survival and grit than high horsepower and slick skills. Demolition drivers

can take part in more than 25 events from the Suicide and Trailer Races to the deadly Figure 8 in over 12 separate venues. And while Eve of Destruction may lack the allure of speedy sports cars and flashy paint jobs, it does offer players the chance to take the wheel in more than 20 budget beauties, including a hearse, an ambulance, a trailer, and a school



bus. In addition to the single-player races, you can also pummel your pals in the competitive split-screen multiplayer mode for a bonus bit of brutality. Alternative racing fans with a proclivity for mashing metal may want to watch for Eve of Destruction when it sputters into stores this fall.—Bones

■ First Look ■ Developed by Monster Games
■ Published by Atari ■ Target release date: September



Godzilla: Save the Earth

PE X This year marks the 50th anniversary of Godzilla, a 200-foot representation of the dangers inherent in nuclear weaponry. With a new and supposedly final Godzilla film in



the works alongside Atari's upcoming monster brawler, this is truly the year of the King of Monsters. Godzilla: Save the Earth picks up where Destroy All Monsters Melee left off with a group of scientists acquiring samples of Godzilla's DNA, which was left behind during the failed Vortaak invasion. When the group cracks Godzilla's cellular makeup and uses it to create an indestructible substance, the Vortaak seize control of Earth's giant monsters and attempt to steal the genetic code for themselves. As Godzilla, you'll stomp your way throughout San Francisco, Los Angeles, Tokyo, Osaka, and New York to fight waves of monsters sent by the alien invaders.

Along with fan favorites like King Ghidorah and Gigan, new monsters will include Mothra, who made brief cameo appearances in the last game; Biollante, a vicious Godzilla/plant hybrid; and Space Godzilla. In addition to the expanded roster of monsters, the sequel's environments will be enhanced. Cities will now feature hills, oceans, and mountains, and buildings will showcase more advanced damage mechanics, enabling you to cause more cataclysmic destruction than before. Save the Earth will also showcase a wide array of online multiplayer games, including head-to-head battles, four-player free-for-all, and two-on-two combat.—Iron Monkey

■ First Look ■ Developed by Pipeworks
■ Published by Atari ■ Target release date: Fall 2004



Forza Motorsport



X The Xbox showcases Halo as its main attraction, but one of Sony's own star attractions is the overwhelmingly popular Gran Turismo series. So it's only natural that Microsoft would take a crack at shattering that racing monopoly. After two years of secret development, the result is Forza Motorsport, and if Microsoft can pull off everything it talked about in an early demo, this new breed of racer might just nudge GT4 into the wall.



Grand Racing Tour

The name "Forza" is Italian for "force" in the sense of a rousing performance, not Luke Skywalker. For GT fans, the most rousing development is the news that collisions, wrecks, and other mishaps will damage the cars, affecting their appearance and performance. This seriously squelches Sony's long-standing explanation for GT's absence of damage since Forza has signed 60 manufacturers and all agreed to let their cars be damaged...in this game, anyway. Ranging from sports compacts to LeMans prototypes, the roster of rides includes cars from Nissan, Mazda, Porsche, Ferrari, BMW, Honda, Mercedes, Dodge, Chevrolet, Acura, and many more.

You can deck out cars with body kits, spoilers, hood scoops, side skirts, custom paint, and more, and you can tune up the performance with aftermarket superchargers, racing slicks, alternate engines, suspension kits, and other parts. Microsoft wasn't ready yet to pin down an exact number of tracks, but it's promising a boatload of them, ranging from the city streets of Rio de Janeiro to famous tracks like Nurburgring and Laguna Seca.



Fierce Competition

Along with damage modeling, Forza is also attempting to outpace GT in the A.I. department. Microsoft talks the expected talk about more lifelike responses from CPU drivers, but it also puts you in charge of those responses with "drivatars," an amalgam of "driving avatars." You can train your own drivatars, or A.I. drivers, to use your preferred racing techniques and style. Drivatars can then sub for you in races or train new drivers for your team.

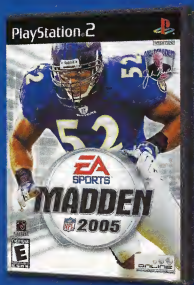
Last but not least, Microsoft is focusing intensely on an accurate simulation approach to the driving style, bandying about phrases like "aerodynamic-load modeling" that sure sound realistic. And online play will of course be a big part of the action as Forza will support eight-player races over Xbox Live. Microsoft has a lot of work left to do under Forza's hood, but this initial look at the game already makes it one of this year's top racing prospects.—*Air Hendrix*

■ First Look ■ Developed and published by Microsoft
■ Target release date: Winter 2005



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Fullmetal Alchemist and the Broken Angel

PE Don't try to cheat death, kids. That's the lesson two brothers named Alphonse and Edward learn in the anime and manga *Fullmetal Alchemist* when Edward tries to resurrect their dead mother using his amazing powers of alchemy. As a result of a technical misinterpretation of the rules, Edward loses an arm and a leg, and has them replaced with mechanical ones. Alphonse fares even worse, losing his entire



body to the ritual, and now his soul is trapped in a giant suit of mechanical armor. Hmm, actually, that sounds kinda cool. Never mind what we said about not trying to cheat death—start dabbling in the dark arts of mystical chemistry now!

Square Enix is taking this premise and turning it into a crazy action game in which you control protagonist Edward, alchemizing things in the environment marked with glowing "Alchemy Circles" and transmogrifying everyday objects into tools of destruction and items to boost his abilities, such as cannons, crossbows, stone spikes, and sheets of rock to block attacks.



He can also transform his arm into weapons and use his giant robotic brother, Alphonse,

to defend him. The game was released overseas in December 2003, so if you're into importing, you can check it out now. Otherwise, look for it to hit the U.S. next year.—*Star Dingo*

■ **First Look** ■ Developed by Radjin

■ Published by Square Enix U.S.A. ■ Target release date: Spring 2005



Shellshock: Nam '67

PE **X** **PS** As games based on World War II have become so last year, developers like Guerilla Games are now turning their attention to the latest of gaming fads: the Vietnam War. In an effort to distinguish its title from this year's upcoming surge of third-person-shooting games set in this time period, Guerilla Games has taken some ambitious steps to create an interactive world that is both historically accurate and brutally realistic while still capturing the drama of Hollywood epics like *Full Metal Jacket* and *Platoon*. The recent preview build we played revealed the serious and unforgiving realities of war with a splash of cinematic style, but also featured a few nagging bugs in need of extermination.

Faulty A.I. and glitchy graphics are par for the course in beta versions, and this Shellshock build is no exception with self-resurrecting enemies and random crashes throughout. While all these concerns may be remedied easily enough, the sluggish controls and awkward first-person aiming mode are in need of serious attention. On the bright side, Shellshock is full of authentic movie-style scenarios that have you fighting in rice paddies, searching raided villages, and escaping P.O.W. camps amidst

twitching corpses, friendly fire, trophy-collecting psychos, and a lot of foul language. Nevertheless, if action isn't taken to right the wrongs of this preview build (and it can be fixed, but it's going to take some work), Shellshock: Nam '67 may never escape its own booby traps.—*Bones*

■ **Hands-On** ■ Developed by Guerilla Games

■ Published by Eidos Interactive

■ Target release date: June

All screens shown here are from the PlayStation 2 version.

Catwoman

EA's Catwoman game is looking both surprising and predictable. Surprising because it's not the wretched license-hanger that you expect, but predictable because it's shaping up into the Prince of Persia-like combo of third-person action, platform hopping, and puzzle solving that movie-licensed games usually entail. The game follows the film's events closely, showcasing the likeness and voice of Halle Berry to fine effect (there's even an "ogle" camera for you naughty sorts). The surprises come from the rich lighting and graphics, as well as the game's innovative use of both analog sticks to control the combat, including Catwoman's whip moves, feline abilities (seeing in the dark, surviving falls, etc.), and capolera fighting style. But in the end, the gameplay involves pounding guards, flipping switches, and tricky sequences of jumping. If that sort of thing and Catwoman appeal to you, this game should be decent stuff. —*Air Hendrix*

■ **Hands-On** ■ **Developed by EA UK** ■ **Published by EA Games** ■ **Target release date: July**

All screens shown here are from the PlayStation 2 version.



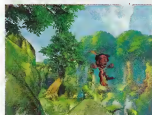
The Punisher

Combine third-person bullet-time gunplay with some extremely excessive violence, and you've got *The Punisher*, Volition's (Red Faction, Summoner) video-game adaptation of one of Marvel's most notoriously brutal comics. The story (written by glorious sicko scribes Garth Ennis and Jimmy Palmiotti) is sort of a "Frank Castle's Greatest Hits" collection, merging his finest moments and acquaintances. While the action definitely takes cues from games like *Max Payne* or *Dead to Rights*, there's a cruel new hook for those who are sick of killing stuff in slow motion: the "interrogation" system, which lets you grab bad guys and drag them to "hot zones" in the level marked by ghostly Punisher skulls. Once there, you proceed to torture and/or kill them in some really sick and twisted ways—shoving faces into piranha tanks or whole bodies into chipper-shredders à la *Fargo*. M-rated, for sure. Sadomasochistic. —*Star Dingo*

■ **Update** ■ **Developed by Volition** ■ **Published by THQ** ■ **Target release date: Fall 2004**

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Tak 2: The Staff of Dreams



Faster, braver, stronger—that's unlikely tribal hero Tak's mantra in his latest adventure to keep the perilously powerful Staff of Dreams from evil Tlaloc's filthy hands. The clumsy, goofy Tak from the original game has undergone a bit of a transformation since we last saw him—he's a little older, a little more sure of himself now that he's the apprentice of tribal guru Jibolba.

Tak 2 is taking the original game's unique animal interaction gameplay to a different level as Tak can now use Juju magic to possess the jungle critters and transform into different Spirit Animals. The combat is being expanded to include new weapons (including the Thwark, Bolas, and Dream Shaker) and a new potion-creating system that lets Tak come up with his own Juju magic combinations. Also included: an assortment of multiplayer "Dinky Games" for head-to-head competition. —*Star Dingo*

■ **First Look** ■ **Developed by Avalanche** ■ **Published by THQ** ■ **Target release date: October**



Mortal Kombat: Deception

PE X With Deadly Alliance, the Mortal Kombat series returned to the form that originally made it a classic, and Mortal Kombat: Deception aims to keep the franchise shining brightly. The fighting engine remains similar to Deadly Alliance's, including the three-stance system, but you can now punch opponents through walls and ceilings. MKD will also bust out of the ring with mini-games that



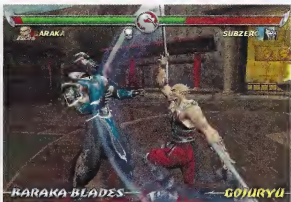
include chess and a puzzle game much like Super Puzzle Fighter II. Characters will also be able to roam freely across a 3D landscape in a retooled, RPG-like Konquest mode where you control a young warrior, guiding him to fame and fortune while incidentally learning the ins and outs of the combat system. You'll prow through six realms, encountering both new and familiar characters to brawl with (reportedly, every MK character ever will appear in this model).

In the title fights, you'll find 24 characters (not including the torrent of hidden ones) with roughly six moves and two Fatalities each. You'll be able to pick up weapons as well, and on the other side of the coin, losers can pull a suicide move to prevent victors from unleashing a Fatality. And to save the best for last, online competitions will be a big part of the action with both versions supporting voice chat.

—Air Hendrix

■ First Look ■ Developed and published by Midway
■ Target release date: Fall 2004

All screens shown here are from the PlayStation 2 version.



Leisure Suit Larry: Magna Cum Laude

PE X Post. Hey, kid, look over here. We recently got an early preview version of Leisure Suit Larry (giggle giggle) in house, and guess what? It's really damn funny. And really well acted. A graphical and gameplay juggernaut? Well, maybe not so much. But if you were worried that Larry would be self-censored for his console debut, put those worries to rest...the early version (still unapproved by the ESRB, alas) is filled with some pretty crazily over-the-top sequences of nudity, quadruple-entendre, and general super-bawdiness.

Fans of Larry's old graphic adventure style should note that the game definitely takes a much more "casual" approach to gameplay. Progress mostly involves playing lots



and lots of mini-games

(including variations of Tapper, Pong, and PaRappa) to keep your hands occupied while the goofy raunch goes on parade. Rather than picking lines of dialogue in a conversation, Larry tries to hit different scrolling icons that represent what he'll say next, each with a color (red = bad, green = good) indicating how well it will be received by his object of affection. Hit a squid icon, for example, and he may mention sushi...or Willie Nelson's giant squid...or the time he was abducted by alien squids...or some fish-related comment we dare not repeat in a magazine that might be read by your mother. Tasteless? You betcha! But definitely not bland.—Star Dingo

■ Hands-On ■ Developed by High Voltage Software
■ Published by Vivendi Universal Games
■ Target release date: October



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Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon 2



These days, Tom Clancy games are a bona-fide force to be reckoned with, but that wasn't always the case. While the franchise has always been quite popular on the PC side, it wasn't until Ghost Recon hit the Xbox (and more specifically, Xbox Live) that things kicked into high gear for the military series. Unlike more accessible Clancy titles like *Splinter Cell* and *Rainbow Six*, the Ghost Recon series is much more meticulous and strategy oriented. Ghost Recon 2 adheres to this mold and ups the ante in several ways, starting with enemy A.I. A smart opposing force is critical in justifying your careful planning and patience in maneuvering to just the right position. You'll have a variety of new communication options to manage your team and the ability to view your character from a third-person viewpoint.

The online aspect of Ghost Recon 2 is sure to please fans who have requested a myriad of refinements like improving the waiting lobby process, being able to select equipment in game, and setting up custom competitions. One feature developer Red Storm Entertainment is quite excited about is the split-screen multiplayer support for link and Xbox Live play. You can also play cooperatively through missions and save partway through if you need to tend to the outside world. —Tokyo Drifter



■ **First Look** ■ **Developed by** Red Storm Entertainment
 ■ **Published by** Ubisoft ■ **Target release date:** Winter 2004
 All screens shown here are from the Xbox version.



The Urbz: Sims in the City



The time has come for The Sims to move to the big city, but a locale change also means a stylish makeover. Urbz are hippped up Sims who look to gain a reputation for themselves in this area of bright lights and new opportunities. Your main motivation is to be the most trend-setting and glamorous player in town so that at the drop of a hat, you can get into the best restaurants or hottest nightclubs just because you've got it like that. Of course, that sort of pull takes a lot of work, including finding a high-profile job and hanging with the in-crowd.

The path to getting a good rep can take many forms, starting with the neighborhood you choose to live in. Nine districts ensure that you'll have some way of making it big that matches your sensibilities...or wildest fantasies. If one look doesn't seem to be working, you can change your clothing and hairstyle, and try to turn things in a different direction. One thing that never changes is the need for some green, and earning Simoleons is still a requirement to buy the finer things as well as to gain access to new interaction options. Get ready for a brand-new you this fall. —Tokyo Drifter

■ **First Look** ■ **Developed by** Maxis ■ **Published by** EA Games ■ **Target release date:** Fall 2004



All screens shown here are from the Xbox version.



Otogi 2

X This sequel takes place directly after the conclusion of Otogi: Myth of Demons, when the heroic undead warrior Raikoh successfully thwarted an attack on the Japanese people by an army of vicious demons. But when the evil forces begin to regroup and prepare for another onslaught, five suicidal warriors off themselves in order to complete an ancient ritual to resurrect the great Raikoh in hopes of saving the world once more. Gamers familiar with the first game won't be surprised to learn that Otogi 2 is deeply rooted in real Japanese folklore and carries a heavy load of Asian philosophy and mysticism. Otogi 2 boasts an entirely new engine with improved graphics and realistic physics, as well as six playable characters. In addition to a traditional story mode with multiple endings, Otogi 2 will also feature a new Havoc mode focusing on unbridled carnage.—*Bones*

■ First Look ■ Developed by From Software
■ Published by Sega ■ Target release date: Winter 2004



Karaoke Revolution Volume 2

P Whether you're dancing on a pad or even scratching and replacing missing notes to your favorite songs, Konami has you covered with games like DDR and Beat Mania. So it should come as no surprise that Konami is bringing out a second coming of the latest craze in pop-puzzle games—Karaoke Revolution.

Konami has done with Karaoke Revolution Volume 2 what it has done with all its other music-related sequels: taken the same formula from the first volume, changed the songs, and, as a bonus incentive, added a couple of new stages and game modes. In this case, the new modes are Showtime and Medley, which are essentially story and endurance modes. Volume 2 also features new characters in addition to ones from the previous title to portray your alter ego when it's time to take center stage.—*Test Monkey*

■ Hands-On
■ Developed by Harmonix Music
■ Published by Konami
■ Target release date: July

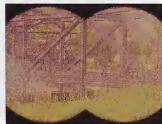
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Delta Force: Black Hawk Down

X Some gamers are used to playing first-person shooters on their own; but for others, the option of engaging in multiplayer co-op missions makes all the difference. That's exactly what NovaLogic is bringing to the table with Delta Force: Black Hawk Down, an FPS war game that re-creates events that occurred during Operation Restore Hope and Task Force Ranger in Somalia in 1993. The game features more than a dozen campaigns filled with extremely hostile Somali militia. Your duties vary upon each mission as you infiltrate, extract, cover, and demolish your way through numerous chaotic villages. While Black Hawk Down lets you play split-screen co-op on one console, it also allows for Xbox Live compatibility, so up to 16 players can duke it out a little more uncooperatively at one time. Prepare for insertion when Black Hawk Down is released in October.—*Test Monkey*

■ First Look ■ Developed by Climax
■ Published by NovaLogic ■ Target release date: October

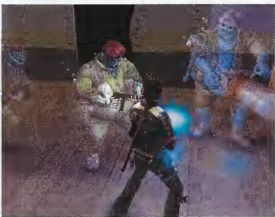


Ghost Hunter

FE It's not every day you get thrust into the paranormal world, but such is the situation rookie cop Lazarus Jones finds himself in. In *Ghost Hunter*, Lazarus and his partner, Anna Steele, unwittingly unleash all manner of nasty poltergeists into the world. Anna gets snagged by one of the ghouls while Lazarus gets fused with one that gives him sight into the realms of the dead. Now he must save his partner...and the planet in the process!



A dramatic setup like that demands equally dramatic weaponry, so *Ghost Hunter* equips you with ultra high-tech gadgets like futuristic assault rifles and blue plasma-like cannons. The preview version gave a good sense of gameplay variety with elements of stealth, reconnaissance, and straight-up action. It's a bit tough at first to manage all the modes Laz has at his disposal, including first-person and hunter modes, but it gets easier as you play along. The visuals are already looking quite crisp with eerie shimmering effects for the ghosts, but the audio commands the most attention. Chilling atmospheric sounds and effective creature voices help get you in the spirit of things (pun intended). Look for more on this intriguing title soon.—Tokyo Drifter



■ Hands-On ■ Developed by SCE Studio Cambridge
■ Published by Namco ■ Target release date: August



Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3: Black Arrow

X Despite being released last year at virtually the same time as *Counter-Strike*, the king of online first-person shooters, *Rainbow Six 3* received better reviews and, more importantly, greater popularity on Xbox Live. To be fair, the former was basically an update of a four-year-old game and the latter had a story-driven single-player mode. *Black Arrow* is more of an expansion rather than a full-blown sequel, but that doesn't mean it skimps on



features. Among the list of upgrades are new weapons, extra equipment, and a single-player campaign that now spans the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe.

Based on a recently playable build, the control scheme has not changed, but the intelligence of the enemy has. Opponents now call for backup when in trouble and use hostages as human shields. Not yet functioning was the online play, which, when up and running, will add support for the recently upgraded Xbox Live that features user-created tournaments, messaging, and clan statistics. Private lobbies where teams can map out strategies and two new game modes—capture the flag and capture the point—will also be implemented. For the off-line crowd, a split-screen co-operative campaign has been added with two A.I. characters filling out the rest of your team.—Tokyo Drifter



■ Hands-On ■ Developed by Ubisoft Montreal ■ Published by Ubisoft ■ Target release date: August

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Second Sight



Second Sight tells the fractured story of John Vattic, a professional "psychic debunker" who wakes from a six-month coma to find that he is the very thing he once thought impossible—a psychic. Pursued by all and swimming in questions, Vattic must discover the truth about his past if he hopes to escape this nightmare with his life.

Players will get to experiment with a number of different psychic powers during the course of the game, including telekinesis, healing, projection, charm, and psi-blast. Each of these skills is fully integrated into the gameplay, allowing for some intriguing interactions without making things too easy. For example, charm enables Vattic to hide himself from the guards, but because it is a mental power, it will fail if a guard bumps into him or if he walks past a security camera.

Traditional weapons also make an appearance with Vattic gaining full control of an arsenal over the course of the game. But what really has us excited about Second Sight isn't the mental powers or the intense gunplay—it's the story. The plot moves back and forth between the past and the present, revealing the back story while also giving you a chance to change what once went wrong. Keep this one in your sights as we'll definitely be taking a look at it a second time.—*Syrie*

■ First Look ■ Developed by Free Radical Design
 ■ Published by Codemasters
 ■ Target release date: Winter 2004



Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow



Ubisoft isn't a stranger to releasing games across multiple platforms. Sometimes, the games are adjusted to match the console's abilities, but they always weigh in with the same level of playability. The PS2 port of Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow, recently released on the Xbox, should be no exception.

The PS2 version of Pandora Tomorrow will be a direct translation of the Xbox version (the tutorial in the PS2 preview build gave instructions using the Xbox button layout—"Y" instead of "△") with a few tweaks to the maps and sacrifices to the graphics in compromise of the PS2's hardware capabilities. While Pandora Tomorrow will play the same on the PS2, it will now feature a multiplayer game where you can test your stealth skills against opponents with real brains rather than artificial intelligence. The preview build we tried offered playability throughout most of the same stages found in the Xbox version. Although some simple sound and graphics bugs were expected, we found that a lot of the lights in the game were surprisingly impenetrable to bullets, which just might change the way Sam gets things done when he invades the PS2.

Thus far, Ubisoft has done a good job porting Pandora Tomorrow to the PS2. Ubisoft has a history of releasing highly polished games, so rest assured it won't let any bugs sneak past on this one.—*Test Monkey*

■ Hands-On ■ Developed by Ubisoft Montreal ■ Published by Ubisoft ■ Target release date: Fall 2004



Spyro: A Hero's Tail



While platformers like Jak and Daxter and Ratchet & Clank have been getting all the attention lately, we mustn't forget the cute, little, purple creature that opened the skies and paved the roads that these giants walk on—and no, we're not talking about Bamey, we're talking about Spyro the Dragon! In *A Hero's Tail*, Spyro and his friends must stop the Evil Red Dragon's plan to use mysteriously powerful Dark Gems to engulf the light from

the Dragon Realm. The gameplay for each of Spyro's friends is different—Sparx the Dragonfly's levels, for example, are rail shooters; Sgt. Byrd uses his jetpack to fly through rings; and Hunter the Cheetah's stages involve lots of bow-hunting and sniping. Spyro himself even has some new abilities, including the enemy-crashing Horn Dive and Tail Swing.—*Test Monkey*

■ **First Look** ■ **Developed by** Eurocom
 ■ **Published by** Vivendi Universal Games
 ■ **Target release date:** Winter 2004

All screens shown here are from the PlayStation 2 version.



Crash Bandicoot: Twinsanity



When a new terror reveals itself in the form of evil twins from another dimension, Crash and Dr. Cortex must set their differences aside and join forces to put a stop to this mutual threat to their existence. Combine the luck-ridden moves of Crash and whatever contraptions the twisted Dr. Cortex is able to conjure with that big noggin of his, place them in a new free-roaming 3D world (that's right, no more levels on rails) as one conjoined entity, throw in a wickedly funny script, and you have the formula for the new wacky Crash adventure. *Twinsanity* takes advantage of the fact that you're playing

as a pair at every opportunity, from cave surfing on Dr. Cortex's body to battling gigantic 'bots using Dr. Cortex as a weapon. As a bonus, Vivendi promises virtually no loading time.—*Test Monkey*

■ **First Look** ■ **Developed by** Traveller's Tales
 ■ **Published by** Vivendi Universal Games
 ■ **Target release date:** Fall 2004

All screens shown here are from the PlayStation 2 version.

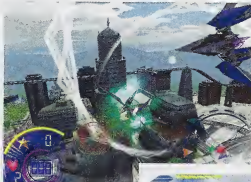


Star Fox 2

A new galactic threat calls together

Team Star Fox one more time—only this time, there are some new comrades to help you out as you engage in solo or team-based missions to battle enemies on both land and in the air. In this sci-fi shooter/adventure, you can take matters into your own hands by playing single-player campaigns, or you can take advantage of the co-op system where partners fly two separate planes (or tanks) or co-pilot just one. Whether you're piloting an Arwing or a Landmaster Tank, or simply handling business by foot, you will have the option of taking enemies down in either first-person or third-person view. With new playable characters, multiplayer functions, and even a co-op mode, *Star Fox 2* should prove to be one of the must-have games of 2004.—*Test Monkey*

■ **First Look** ■ **Developed by** Namco ■ **Published by** Nintendo
 ■ **Target release date:** Winter 2004

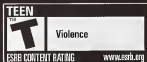


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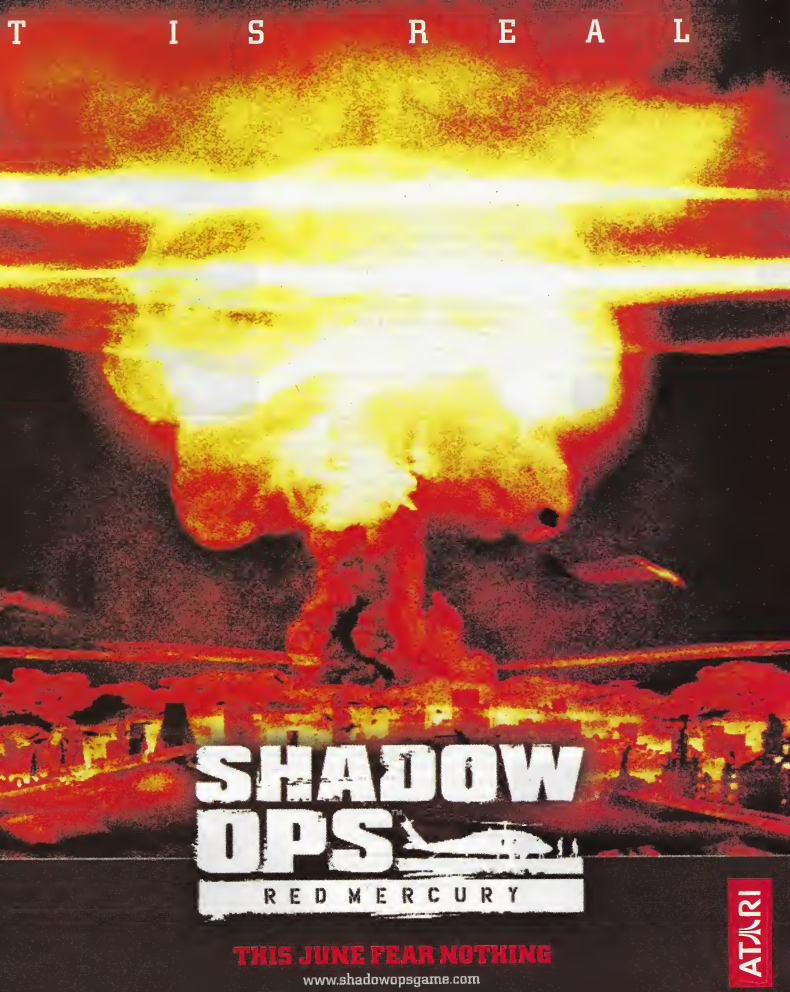


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The Chronicles of Riddick: Escape from Butcher Bay

The Chronicles of Riddick is truly a rare breed—games this great almost never arrive with this little fanfare.

X You may not have seen *Pitch Black*, or you may not think too warmly of Vin Diesel as an actor, but none of that matters. The Chronicles of Riddick: Escape from Butcher Bay stands comfortably alongside Halo and Splinter Cell as one of the Xbox's best games.

Hollywood's Best

Remember back when *The Matrix* was cool and Enter the Matrix was the much-hoped-for synergy between games and Hollywood? While that all flayed, The Chronicles of Riddick takes a much wiser course, delivering the quality that everyone prayed for with Enter the Matrix without all the hype.

Chronicles draws its strength from gameplay that changes constantly and fluidly. One minute, you're facing off against another inmate with shivs inside an illicit boxing ring. Later, you're creeping through shadows like Sam Fisher or running around conducting conversations and handling side-quests in an RPG style. After that, you might find yourself locked in ferocious gun battles or manning a captured mech. Chronicles is full of twists and surprises—you never know what to expect around the next corner, but it usually leaves you gaping in astonishment and delight.

The A.I. is another highlight as guards and opponents continually startle you with their intelligent responses to your actions—you rarely get away with the cheap moves you might rely on from battling guards in other games. It's a pretty long game, too, making up for its lack of multiplayer, and along the way, you'll think you're near the end several times...but you aren't.

A fine story line rich in high production value and unexpected developments provides the perfect backdrop. Fans of *Pitch Black* and the Riddick movie (which hadn't been released yet at the writing of this review) will of course enjoy the plot a bit more as this game serves as a prequel to *Pitch Black*, explaining how Riddick got his eyes "shined" and escaped from prison while hinting at a few of the events in this summer's movie. There are only two minor downsides worth pointing out: The gameplay path is entirely linear, and toward the end of the game, the action degenerates into more standard "find the lever or key" stuff, which gets a bit repetitive (like that series of rooms in Halo's snow level). Still, you'll be having way too much fun to care.

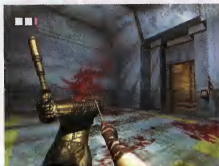
Diesel Power

Enormously high production value adds to the pleasure of playing this game. It's no exaggeration to say that these graphics are the best you've ever seen in a console game. The faces and bodies of characters are animated and detailed to a degree of lifelikeness that you won't anticipate, and the gorgeous environments shine with lustrous lighting and hi-res textures. User-interface elements like a health meter appear on the screen only when needed, adding to the cinematic feel. There's even a slick intro scene borrowed from Half-Life as Riddick is escorted into prison.

Star power helps the audio sizzle. Vin Diesel delivers his lines with a snarling growl that can be chilling, while supporting actors ranging from Xzibit to Ron Perlman to Michael Rooker keep the quality very high. The controls respond smoothly like a well-tuned first-person shooter, incorporating some original mechanisms for stealth kills that are thrilling to execute.

An Xbox-exclusive, Chronicles is a memorably great game. And you gotta love being surprised by a masterpiece without having to endure months of hype beforehand. —Air Hendrix

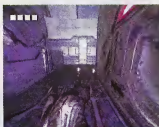
EW Developed by Starbreeze Studios
Published by Vivendi Universal Games
\$49.99 Available now
Action/Adventure 1 player



PRO TIP: When you fight Abbot, dash in as he raises his club, deliver one attack with your shiv, and quickly retreat out of range. Repeat as needed.



There's nothing phony about health packs in this game—Riddick must find a nanomed health station that savagely injects healing medicine straight into his neck.



PRO TIP: Once your eyes are "shined," use this nightvision effect to carefully hide bodies in dark corners. Be tidy because enemies are way smarter in this game than you'd expect.



PRO TIP: Whenever possible, quiet kills are the wisest tactic. Sneak up behind a guard, tap L to grab, and then repeatedly tap X until you snap his neck.



PRO TIP: In double max, there's no need to buy a shiv. You can recover one from the corpse of your third opponent in the ring.




PRO TIP: When a guard tries to club you with the butt of his weapon, tap R halfway through his swing to turn the guard's weapon on him and messily end the encounter.

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GAMEPRO EDITOR'S CHOICE

X	GRAPHICS SOUND CONTROL	5.0	PLAY FACTOR 5.0
		5.0	



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Full Spectrum Warrior

Enlisted or not, you'll enjoy Full Spectrum Warrior's fascinating take on how our troops cope with urban fighting.

X For a moment, forget about the reasons why the United States sent its troops into a foreign country. When you're knee deep in the engrossing gameplay of Full Spectrum Warrior, your job as a soldier is not to ponder why you're in an unfamiliar place. As you constantly exchange gunfire with neighborhood militia while leading a squad of infantrymen through mean, mazelike streets, your tasks are to keep your men alive and complete objectives using military precision and decisiveness.

The Realities of Combat

Although you fire off plenty of bullets, Full Spectrum Warrior is not a shooter. Instead of giving you control of an individual, FSW puts you in command of an entire squad consisting of two four-man teams. As the squad leader, your strategy for success is taken right out of the pages of the MOUT (Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain) book—use one

team to suppress enemy fire while

the other flanks and eliminates the threat. It's an updated cover-and-fire maneuver that every soldier learns. Putting this strategy into action, however, is no simple feat. You need to continuously check all angles, safety your guns with civilians around, consider that most cover can be destroyed by flying bullets in seconds, and be wary of snipers lurking everywhere—and you have to do all of this while under live fire. You'll learn all this the hard way once one of your comrades is hit because you made the wrong call.

Are You Smart or Not?

Thankfully, controlling your men in the game doesn't come with the same high level of stress as the real-life situation.

Simple button presses enable your group to move from cover to cover without missing a step. You can direct your teams to point their weapons anywhere you want, and switching between groups, even during a heavy gun battle, requires little effort.

Early on, you might experience an FPS reflex—wanting to personally pull the trigger on an enemy because your troops just can't hit him—but FSW's innovative gameplay isn't about marksmanship. Not everyone in uniform is as accurate with a rifle in real life as you are in a video game, so the core of the game reflects an authentic firefight, where outthinking an enemy is better than out-gunning an enemy. In this case, skillfully maneuvering your squad to the right places wins the war.

The Spoils of War

Visual realism plays an important role in Full Spectrum Warrior, and the densely populated neighborhoods that make up the game's urban shantytown setting look and feel genuine. Characters, too, bear an uncanny resemblance to actual people with distinct facial expressions and smoothly animated movements. The crude, bravado remarks that come from your men's mouths only reinforce the mature theme of this game and drive the point home: Real war is ugly.

Without a doubt, this game shows that originality in gaming is very much alive and kicking, even if it is wrapped inside a sensitive subject. If you want a true military experience without going through boot camp, Full Spectrum Warrior is it.

—Four-Eyed Dragon



Developed by Pandemic Studios

Published by THQ \$49.99

Available now Action/strategy 2 players



Heavy street fighting. Bullets whizzing by. Your team is yelling at you. Now this is a military game you'd expect from the...well, military.



PROTIP: To cover all angles of attack, have your teams split up. By doing this, you'll cover more ground and surprise any hiding targets.



PROTIP: When you're trying to figure out the best place to put your men while being shot at, hold your fire to conserve ammo. Shoot back only when you know where to place your teams.



PROTIP: In Chapter 4, use the destroyed tank as cover, then take out the hiding gunners and call in an airstrike on the other armor.



PROTIP: If there is absolutely no other way of moving around a well dug-in enemy, toss or fire a grenade at him. He'll either split or be killed.



PROTIP: In narrow alleyways with a sniper or an RPG lover at the other end, have one team give suppression fire as the other team makes its way close enough to use a grenade.

GAMEPRO EDITORS' CHOICE

	GRAPHICS	5.0	FUN FACTOR	5.0
	SOUND	4.5		
	CONTROL	4.5		

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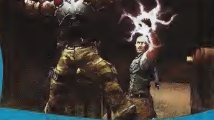
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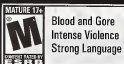
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PlayStation 2



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Thief: Deadly Shadows

Brilliance clashes with the unyielding limits of technology. Who will prevail?

X A fair warning: If you hate waiting and you hate dark games, you'll loathe Thief: Deadly Shadows. The gameplay almost entirely involves sneaking around slowly and quietly, waiting for the right moment to avoid a fight or to grab that crucial map from a high priest's pocket as he wanders off to perform a ritual. If you stir up trouble, it's in your best interest to scuttle into a dark corner and hide, waiting for the search party to give up and assume you've run away. If patience is a virtue, then Garrett (the game's dubious "hero") is a paladin.

Shining in the Darkness

While this kind of slow, patient "stealth" gameplay has obviously been done before, it's never been done this well or been so thoroughly entrenched into every nuance and layer of design. The City and its weird inner workings (pagans, high priests, and ancient societies of mystic evil) comprise a wholly believable world—the scope of the City is wisely intimate, and you soon become familiar with its nuances and people, its alleyways and corners. Each one of the missions plays out less like a point-A-to-B-to-C "level" and more like a structural mystery as you discover flaws in a castle's security or track down clues to secret treasure troves based on eavesdropped conversations; and there are plenty of optional "side-quests" to stumble onto (houses to loot, faction-specific tasks) if you're paying attention. The game makes you rely on your own senses—sights and sounds that Garrett would see—rather than maps with waypoints or enemies blipping on a radar. It does wonders for that whole "immersion" thing.

Ion Storm's insistence on the merits of emergent gameplay pays off beautifully here as there are uncountable ways to affect the world and get through any given encounter. No door is an obstacle because Garrett can lock-pick his way through anything. The game's dynamic lighting factors into everything—and nothing's more satisfying than sneaking up on someone in their own shadow and then stabbing them in the back while they're unaware. The sound is engineered masterfully, and having some sort of 3D surround system is advantageous to figuring out where voices and footsteps are coming from. But the enemies are all A.I. idiot savants—shocking you with their positional awareness ("there he be, by that statue!") and cleverness in tracking you down, baffling you when they get stuck on a corner or forget they just found a dead body under their feet.

Blinded with Science

While Thief may sound like free-form stealth heaven, there are a few major disappointments. While sneaking, peeking, and sniping are precise, the fighting and jumping controls (i.e. the "fast" stuff) are pretty awful. The frame rate doesn't help—it ranges from decent to terrible—and headaches abound. While the graphics are technically stunning (photosurreal and peerlessly lit, much like Doom 3), plenty of times you won't even see these graphics. By its very nature, the game is almost painfully dark, and in order to succeed, you have to extinguish what little light there is. But once the City and its possibilities engulf you, these flaws sort of slip off into the night, easy to miss in all the surrounding brightness. —*Star Dingo*

- EM** ■ Developed by Ion Storm
■ Published by Eidos Interactive ■ \$49.99
■ Available now
■ Stealth/action
■ 1 player



PROTIP: Movement of any kind has a chance to increase your light gem and visibility. If you want to remain totally invisible, crouch and stay totally still.



PROTIP: If you know you'll have to fight a mage-oss, sneak up and steal his or her staff first so he or she can't cast spells.



PROTIP: When sneaking behind someone with the black-jack, wait until Garrett raises his arm to ensure a one-hit bloodless K.O. Don't get too close, or you'll be noticed.



PROTIP: It pays to get caught by the City Guard once—there's good stuff hiding in the prison.



PROTIP: Find a good, unlit "body depository" in every mission—carry all conspicuous corpses to it.

GAMEPRO EDITORS' CHOICE

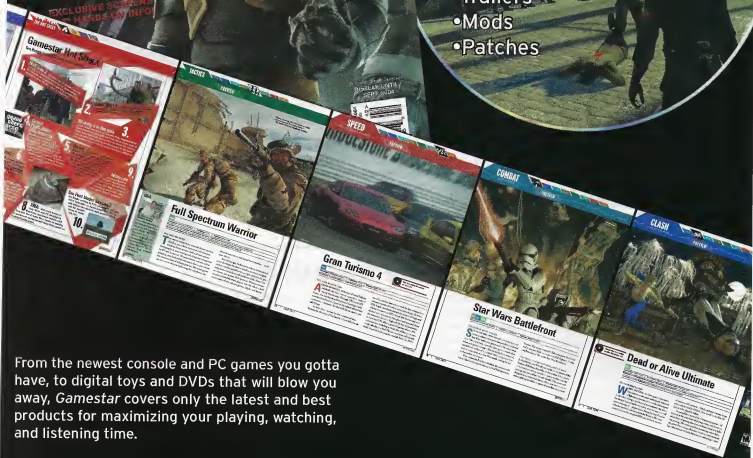
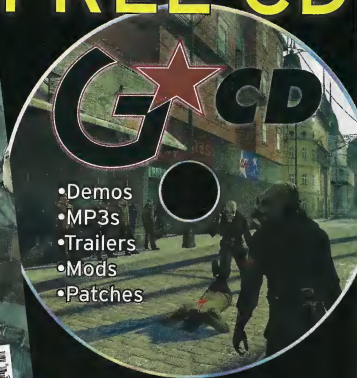
X	GRAPHICS	4.0	FAM FACTOR
	SOUND	5.0	
	CONTROL	4.0	
		4.5	



The game lets you switch between first-person (the old-fashioned way) and third-person view (the new way) at will.

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Metal Slug 3

X When one pieces together a short list of the best arcade side-scrolling shoot-em-ups, the Metal Slug series will undoubtedly surface. The combination of a quick trigger finger and reflexes, and a sense of humor were key to surviving wave after wave of enemy soldiers, and—in the case of MS3—space aliens, man-eating plants, and even zombies. The Xbox version of MS3 is a brilliant translation of its arcade parent that, in some ways, surpasses the source material.

The skeletal narrative is nothing more than a rail that one or two soldiers ride through on a series of shootouts and boss encounters. Moving (usually) left to right across a 2D backdrop, you shoot, collect weapons, dodge incoming fire, and shoot some more, piloting an occasional helpful "vehicle" along the way.



PRO TIP: Beware of collecting too much fruit at one time—if you do, you'll become temporarily "big" and move very slowly.

Mundane as it sounds, MS3 keeps your interest with its nonlinear missions, clever level designs, and unlockable mini-games. Competitive combatants can even take their scores (and egos) online.

MS3's sprite visuals may not turn heads today (or hold a candle to high-powered 3D models), but they have an admirable artistic quality from an era long gone: detailed, humorous, colorful—and all processed by the Xbox without a hint of slowdown or other deficiencies. Simple, responsive controls and excellent sound effects keep the game perpetually playable. For any gamer who lost quarters and busted fingers in the arcade on the Metal Slug battlefield, MS3 will be a welcome addition to their home game library.—*Major Mike*

T ■ Developed and published by SNK ■ \$39.99 ■ Available now ■ Action ■ 2 players



PRO TIP: In Mission 2, look for the cave with "Ice-man" scrawled above the entrance. Shoot the barricade, and you can enter a secret area.

X	GRAPHICS	4.0	FUN FACTOR
	SOUND	4.5	
	CONTROL	4.5	
		4.0	

Manhunt

X When it comes to blood and gore, Rockstar's Manhunt is at the top of the list. The video-game equivalent of *Bmm*, Manhunt offers up plenty of disturbing imagery that is designed to shock and repulse even the most jaded gamers. Unfortunately, once you get past the initial shock, there is little in the way of depth. Strip away the gore, and what you're left with is a rather standard stealth-action title.

Manhunt tells the story of James Earl Cash, a condemned killer. Instead of being executed, Cash is drugged and later finds himself trapped in the rundown alleys of Carcer City. The only way to survive is to fight. One part *Running Man* and one part *Survivor*, the premise driving the gameplay is "kill or be killed."



PRO TIP: After killing a Hunter, drag the body into the shadows—this will keep other Hunters from getting alarmed.

Unlike in other games, players have little chance of surviving a direct encounter with an enemy, despite Cash's size and power. To win here, you must rely on stealth. Much of the game plays out the same way—sneak up on an opponent, hold your kill button, and then let 'er rip. The longer you hold the kill button, the more violent the kill and the higher your score becomes, but you also have a bigger risk of being discovered. In the mid-to-late levels, some gunplay is thrown into the mix, but it, too, feels repetitive.

For the hardcore gamer, Manhunt's appeal is the pure challenge involved—there's no question that this is one tough game. If you don't enjoy a challenge just for the sake of doing it, though, Manhunt isn't going to appeal to you. With an underdeveloped story and uninspired gameplay, Manhunt is more of a flash in the pan than a real fire.—*Syrie*

M ■ Developed by Rockstar North ■ Published by Rockstar Games ■ \$49.99 ■ Available now ■ Action/stealth ■ 1 player

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PRO TIP: When going for a kill, hold down the attack button until you reach the third power level. More violent kills mean more points.

X	GRAPHICS	3.5	FUN FACTOR
	SOUND	4.5	
	CONTROL	4.0	
		3.5	



PRO TIP: Counterattacking is the key to victory. Against a horizontal attack, press Δ to attack vertically. Press \square to slash horizontally against vertical strikes.

Way of the Samurai 2

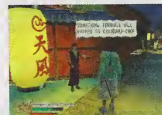
FE The original Way of the Samurai carved its way to cult status thanks to an engaging story line and sword-play that demanded patience, practice, and skills to execute one-cut kills using aggressive button-mashing. Way of the Samurai 2 should continue to satisfy fans in both regards. This time, you play a wandering samurai, who becomes the wild card in a struggle between townsfolk, magistrates, and yakuza gangsters. As in the first game, you spend most of your time earning cash jobs as the different factions try to woo you into their respective camps.

The game's graphics, sounds, and controls also conspire adequately to move the story along. The visuals look sharp and are in the style of most Capcom adventure games. The camera, however, bangs around the landscape but eventually settles on decent views. Characters vocalize key story info in a slow and deliberate manner during cinema sequences, but a snappy menu system enables you take care of business.

Samurai swordplay is the draw here, but it's definitely an acquired taste. Swordfights are tuned to a sort of one-cut, one-kill style that forces you to play for position and counterattacks. The game also features a great move system that endows swords with what you obtain with a variety of attacks.

Don't walk into Samurai 2 expecting action like in *Kill Bill*, Vol. 2. In fact, you can pursue the multiple endings with minimal swordplay if you like. The way of the samurai is a lengthy road that rewards those who show patience and persistence.—*Brother Buzz*

M ■ Developed by Acquire ■ Published by Capcom ■ \$39.99 ■ Available now ■ Action ■ 1 player



PRO TIP: You have to earn cash (called mon), so find the three job brokers and keep busy. Also, slash crates and jars to find mon. It might seem like chump change, but it adds up.

FE	GRAPHICS	3.5	FUN FACTOR
	SOUND	3.0	
	CONTROL	3.5	
		4.0	

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban

PE As Harry Potter grows up, so does his franchise. Although *Prisoner of Azkaban* is still aimed at the tween set, it's more interesting—visually and interactively—than previous Potter games. And yet, Harry still has a way to grow.

Sirius Trouble

Based on the third book (and third film) in the Potter saga, *Azkaban* introduces such interesting bits as the terrifying Dementors and escaped prisoner Sirius Black, both of which contribute to an overall darker atmosphere. The game's improved graphics—much more detail in Hogwarts's School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, as well as the visibly older Harry, Ron, and Hermione—help convey some of that feeling here.

The core gameplay is still 3D action/adventure; you're still running around the school with occasional stealth, collecting Bertie Bott's Every Flavor Beans and Wizard Cards, and passing puzzles by throwing switches. But it's been augmented with new bits, such as a (slightly) deeper control scheme, dueling segments, fresh actions like rope climbing, flying (as Hedwig, Buckbeak, and other beasts), and most notably, the ability to switch between the three heroes to complete tasks and solve stumbers as a team.

Well, "stumbers" is a little strong of a word. *Azkaban*'s puzzles are not tricky, and they are similarly structured—lots of switches to throw and objects to move—and your cohorts give away the solutions with incessant "Does that switch do anything?" style comments. And if you're in for a linear, do-what-you're-told experience anyway, why not read the book? You'll find more surprises.

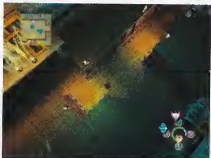
In-game cinema sequences are blended with the action, balancing narration and action into a smooth flow, but the user-controlled camera is insidious; you'll be fighting it almost all the time (thank heavens for the one-button targeting), and even character movement feels too twitchy. Ron and Harry's voices are acceptable, but Hermione's sound-alike is about as British as, well, an American in her mid-20s. At least the orchestral soundtrack sounds right.

Growing Pains

The EyeToy games are a fun treat (even if they are just Potterized versions of wave-your-hands-in-the-air-like-you-just-don't-care stuff gamers have already seen), and you can definitely see that the designers tried to "age up" the proceedings with a fair amount of success—for all its flaws, this is definitely a more engaging game than previous Potter platters. *Azkaban* is definitely a step in the right direction; here's hoping the development team can take even bigger steps next time. —Dan Elektro

Also on the Xbox and GameCUBE

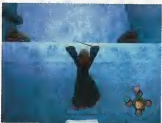
PE ■ Developed by EA UK ■ Published by EA Games
■ \$39.99 ■ Available now ■ Action/adventure ■ 1 player



PROTIP: Hit the L2 button for stealth segments; the high overhead camera angle will suit you better.



Azkaban features several new goodies, including the ability to control Ron, Hermione, and...Hedwig!



PROTIP: Keep an eye out for treasure chests; they're often tucked into corners of levels, but they're worth seeking out.



Six EyeToy games come on the *Azkaban* disc (including *Seeker Practice* and *Exploding Snap*), all of which are unlocked and ready to play right away.

PE	GRAPHICS	4.0	FUN FACTOR	3.5
	SOUND	3.5		
	CONTROL	3.0		



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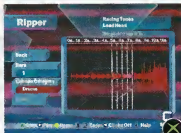
GAME DESIGN
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E-COMMERCE
SOFTWARE ENGINEERING
TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT
MULTIMEDIA
WEB DESIGN
DATABASE MANAGEMENT



PROTIP: Hermione's flaming Glacius boss is standard stuff—freeze the mouth, then freeze each projectile limb until it disappears.

MTV Music Generator 3: This Is the Remix

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PRO TIP: Take your time with the crop tool when ripping tracks. In order to use a sample, it has to start and end at the same point.

GAMEPRO EDITORS' CHOICE

E	GRAPHICS	3.0	PEN FACTOR	4.5
	SOUND CONTROL	4.5		
X	GRAPHICS	3.0	PEN FACTOR	4.5
	SOUND CONTROL	4.5		

E MTV Music Generator 3 may not be a game in the truest sense, but that doesn't mean it won't hold your interest. As one of the few creative titles for the home consoles, MTV's beauty isn't in what ships with the game but what you can make with it. Slip the shiny disc into your system, and suddenly a standard game console becomes a 24-track mixer, complete with a built-in sampler.

Start by choosing a themed sample bank—the game features 10 artists to choose from, including OutKast, Fabolous, Krafty Kuts, and Snoop Dogg—then play around with a prebuilt song. Once you are comfortable with the interface, wipe the slate clean and build a new masterpiece from scratch. If you can't find the perfect sound in the included sample bank, insert any CD from your collection and rip your own. The editing tools are rudimentary but more than adequate for what's here.

The game's greatness lies in its intuitive interface and ease of use. Just about anyone can sit down and make music in a matter of minutes. If you can play with LEGO bricks, you can use the generator. Of the two versions, the Xbox is preferable thanks to shorter load times. When you're listening to hundreds of samples, every second counts. Unfortunately, the software does not enable you to mix samples between the included tracks, so don't plan on dropping Sean Paul vocals over a Carl Cox beat. Outputting your songs to CD or MP3 is possible, but you have to connect your console to a computer to do it.—*Syrie*

E ■ Developed by Mix Max ■ Published by Codemasters ■ \$29.99 ■ Available now ■ Music creativity ■ 1 player

Galactic Wrestling: Featuring Ultimate Muscle

E For those who expect Galactic Wrestling: Featuring Ultimate Muscle to be a straight port of the previous cel-shaded GameCube Ultimate Muscle game, you're in for a surprise. Aki has implemented some drastic changes, which include numerous tweaks, enhancements, and unfortunate omissions.

The most noticeable change is the in-game graphics, which have been entirely replaced by polygons. The new graphics scheme enables the game to run faster and smoother—even faster than Def Jam Vendetta—but the visuals and hit detection are riddled with small glitches that detract from the upgrade.

Players will also notice the increased grab bag of 48 kooky wrestlers—24 of which are unlockable, representing a menagerie of well-known and obscure characters from both the original series and second generation. Character moves have all been tweaked slightly and are additionally supplemented by new ground grapples and pinfalls.

Continued from the previous game are the standard Versus, Tournament, and Toy modes. But Story mode has unfortunately been replaced entirely by a Survival mode. In Survival mode, you can play as a single character that continually faces matches without health increases, or you can take part in a tag team Mask Hunt, where your team must fight to unmask your opponents. Additionally, the Create-A-Wrestler mode from the previous title has been completely omitted.

While the new game-engine changes are a definite added welcome, glitches and all, the omissions of the Story and Create-A-Wrestler modes leave this title rather pale and without substance compared to the GameCube edition.—*Rice Burner*

T ■ Developed by Aki ■ Published by Bandai ■ \$39.99 ■ Available now ■ Action ■ 4 players



PRO TIP: In the Mask Hunt, get three flames for both tag partners and execute the Level 3 super move to rip off your opponents' mask.

E	GRAPHICS	3.0	PEN FACTOR	3.5
	SOUND CONTROL	4.0		



PRO TIP: Be sure to rotate between the characters frequently in single-player mode to utilize each one's special attacks.

Between the characters to overcome the menial obstacles feels like a chore when playing solo. Several nasty camera problems and a control scheme that borders on sluggish do hamper the fun in places, but such gripes are easily forgotten in the course of this light-hearted but seriously fun adventure.

Younger gamers will no doubt flock to this title, but older players and fans of the films would do well to sneak a few pals over when the little ones are napping and give Shrek 2 the chance it deserves.—*Bones*

E ■ Developed by Luxoflux ■ Published by Activision ■ \$49.99 ■ Available now ■ Action ■ 4 players

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E	GRAPHICS	4.0	PEN FACTOR	4.0
	SOUND CONTROL	3.5		
X	GRAPHICS	4.5	PEN FACTOR	4.0
	SOUND CONTROL	3.5		
G	GRAPHICS	4.5	PEN FACTOR	4.0
	SOUND CONTROL	3.5		

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Activate Hype Barrier

Pst. Hey. It's August. Yeah, it's our post-E3 issue, but this column won't tell you to run out and preorder Doom 3 because it's so awesome. You can get hype everywhere else. Oh, those games that have been bounced around for a couple years now are finally coming out? Yawn. Tell us something we don't know.

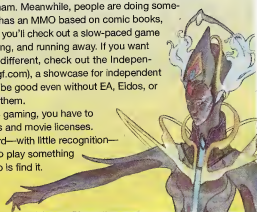
With E3 a stress-soaked memory, it's a good time to look past the next couple of months and into the future at those cool titles that don't get eight-page features in every magazine every month. No, we're not looking at you, Half-Life 2. We're looking past you, down the street, around the corner, at Tabula Rasa, Evil Genius, and Call of Cthulhu. Dungeon Siege 2, Auto Assault, Sid Meier's Pirates, and even Duke Nukem Forever, which EB Games still lists as an optimistic mid-November release.

PC gaming has always been a hobby of underdogs seeking the top at a leisurely pace and of brilliant minds making the impossible possible on a regular basis. Outside of the big-glamour announcements of a new card by Nvidia or the next high-speed Pentium chip, the PC industry is made up of folks trying to make the most kick-ass games they possibly can for you to play on a machine that was most likely meant to help your parents do their taxes.

This fall, your assignment is to look beyond the hype and find some PC titles that might have otherwise slipped through the cracks. Even as we speak, there are probably 47 RTSes being released in Germany, 10 MMOs with a medieval fantasy theme, and six or seven first-person shooters based on WWII or Vietnam. Meanwhile, people are doing something different. Cryptic has an MMO based on comic books, and Ion Storm's betting you'll check out a slow-paced game about sneaking, shanking, and running away. If you want something even more different, check out the Independent Games Festival (igf.com), a showcase for independent games that manage to be good even without EA, Eidos, or Atari tossing money at them.

To really get into PC gaming, you have to look past console ports and movie licenses. People are working hard—with little recognition—to make sure you get to play something cool. All you have to do is find it.

—D-Pad Destroyer



City of Heroes

It's everyone's dream—admit it. You've always wanted to jump up and fly over buildings, shoot lasers from your eyes, or punch evildoers so hard that they go sailing into the nearest wall. Up until now, MMOs have offered you a chance to wield great magic, swing powerful weapons, and do other things that characters from Tolkien used to do. City of Heroes, bless its heart, offers you a chance to leap tall buildings, throw fire, and freeze enemies with your ice-breath, all with an unapologetic innocence that makes the game refreshing, despite its limited focus.



PROTIP: Controllers might not seem so powerful at first glance, but their ability to make any tough fight easier makes them extremely valuable in groups.

Paragon City Needs Heroes

When you start the game, you create a character from one of five Archetypes and five Origins, and head into a besieged city that's in desperate need of heroes. You might think that five Archetypes (the City of Heroes equivalent of "classes") aren't enough, but when you take a look at the power sets within each Archetype, you'll see what makes City of Heroes such a diverse game. A Defender, for example, could take Radiation Emission to focus on weakening his foes, Force Fields to protect his friends, Empathy to become a true healer, or Storm Summoning to have a good balance of powers overall. Characters are much more "unique" than in other MMOs, so you have to actually get to know other players and learn what they're capable of.

Technically, the game is better than most games out there but maybe not as good as its upcoming competitor. While the city and its denizens look pretty dull, powers and most heroes are dazzling and super cool. Generic but enjoyable sounds punctuate the combat. Your hero controls like a truck, but a bit of key remapping helps with that, and COH offers movement modes (super-speed, flight, super-leaping, teleportation) that make other games look landlocked. Also, City of Heroes enjoyed one of the smoothest launches in the history of MMOs, which shows that the launch team planned ahead and knew what it was doing.

Level Up...for Justice!

Like most other MMOs, City of Heroes is most fun when played with friends. Just going around and seeing all the superheroes people have come up with is awesome, but going into Perez Park with a team of six people is a wonder to behold. With so many EQ-me-toos out there, it's refreshing to play something new, and to have it be this good is like finding a cooler of lemonade in the middle of the desert.

—Dunjin Master

IT ■ Developed by Cryptic Studios
■ Published by NCsoft
■ \$49.99 ■ Available now
■ RPG ■ Massively multiplayer

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PROTIP: Danger zones like Perez Park are filled with wall-to-wall gangs that are much tougher than the ones elsewhere in the city. Don't go far from the entrance without at least one teammate and preferably more.

GAMEPRO
EDITORS' CHOICE

PC GRAPHICS 4.0
SOUND 4.0
CONTROL 4.0
4.5

Recommended System Specifications
■ Windows XP/XP or Mac OS X 1.7 GHz
■ 512 MB RAM ■ 2.5 GB or HD ■ 128 MB video card

Thief: Deadly Shadows

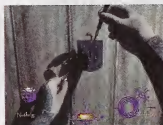
PC Some games grab you and bring you firmly into their world. With its dynamic lighting, great physics, and reactive world, Ion Storm's *Deus Ex: Invisible War* was one of those games, and we thought it was one of the best games last year. As awesome as it was, though, it's now clear that *Invisible War* was more than just a great game: It was a dress rehearsal for *Thief: Deadly Shadows*.

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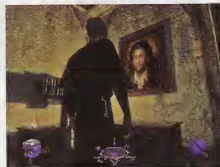
I'll Have To Stealth

Considering that it's a game about sneaking and stealing stuff, *Thief* takes its one narrow focus and shoves it as deep as it will go. Whereas *Deus Ex* gave you tons of options as to how to play the game, *Thief* gives you one: sneak. Sure, Garrett (the main character) has a dagger, and he's great with a bow, but most face-to-face fights will end in a fantastic display of rag-doll physics as Garrett slumps to the ground. In order to win this game, you'll have to do some real sneaking. Thankfully, Garrett is a master thief who makes Sam Fisher look like one of those goofy toy monkeys with the clattering cymbals.

Once you realize the narrow focus of the game, you'll also see how deep it gets. *Thief* places you at the scene of your crimes with objectives to solve and a few notes on how to solve them. Most buildings have multiple alternate entrances, and there's treasure lying everywhere for an enterprising thief to take. You can take out torches



PROTIP: The shape of a lock and the material it's made of will give you clues as to how to unlock it. Memorize these clues, and you'll master lock picking in no time.



PROTIP: Watch for objects on a target's person before you attack. Some NPCs carry keys, maps, and other things you can finger without ever touching the person.



PROTIP: Water arrows can take out larger lights like chandeliers. The trick is to aim at the ceiling just above them so that the rain of water will come down and put out the candles.

with water arrows, blind guards with flash bombs, use fallen enemies to set up ambushes for their friends, and pick-pocket keys and maps from unaware citizens. And that's just a few examples.

I Attack the Darkness!

The real star of this show is the A.I. of the characters you encounter as you play. Ion Storm spent as much energy tweaking the physics in *Invisible War* as it spent time on the A.I. in *Thief*. Civilians who spot you might run to fetch a guard, and they'll have a conversation about you as they search. Civilians also show the proper amount of fear for people encountering an invisible enemy that could shank them in an instant. Guards who hear something will draw their swords and start searching, saying things

like, "Maybe he's behind that crate," and "C'mon out so I can fight you, coward." These things are completely unscripted, but it's eerie how well they work out to give you a real feeling of being stalked in a living, breathing medieval city.

Play It, Taffer

Along with the A.I., everything else falls into place as an evolution of the technology Ion Storm developed for *Deus Ex*. The

true wonder of the game isn't in normal mapping or Havok physics, but rather in the low-tech ways in which the game turns skulking in the dark into tons of fun. There's still room in this business for loving craftsmanship and intelligent design, and *Deadly Shadows* has both.—D-Pad Destroyer

DM ■ Developed by Ion Storm ■ Published by Eidos Interactive
■ \$49.99 ■ Available now ■ Stealth/action ■ 1 player



PROTIP: Be patient and listen in on any conversations you come across. You'll learn valuable information about your objectives, and sometimes, you'll hear about special loot you otherwise might have missed.



PROTIP: Guards with torches are Garrett's nightmare. If you're a good shot with the bow, you can take out the torch, but it's often better to save your water arrows and just shoot the guard.



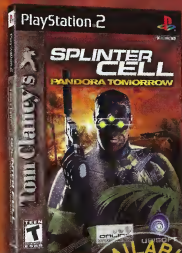
PROTIP: Keep an eye out for arrows lying about. Look in bushes for moss arrows, near leaky pipes for water arrows, and in extinguished fires for fire arrows.

GAMEPRO
EDITORS' CHOICE

PC GRAPHICS 5.0 FUN FACTOR 5.0
SOUND 5.0
CONTROL 4.5

Recommended System Specifications
■ Windows 2000/XP ■ Pentium 4 1.5 GHz
■ 256 MB RAM ■ 3.0 GB on HD ■ 128 MB video card

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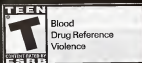


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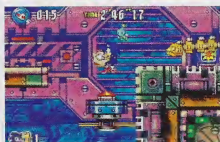


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PROTIP: Holding down R sets you up for a two-character combo. Here, Sonic gets some extra jump height by using Cream to double-jump.

the basic Sonic 2D building blocks—the straightforward “go right and go right fast!” gameplay—are still the foundation, and the tendency toward repetition (it’s all springs, loops, and grind-rails in Sonictown) won’t win any new fans for the franchise.

Aside from some garish tunes in the Toy Kingdom, the game sounds and looks great, and the use of color and character animation is a step above even the already sharp-looking Sonic Advance 2, but the series is definitely losing momentum. The hedgehog species is heavy on attitude but has a hard time with evolution.—*Star Dingo*

E ■ Developed by Sonic Team ■ Published by THQ ■ \$29.99 ■ Available now ■ Action ■ 2 players

Sonic Advance 3

What’s different this third time around for Sega’s little blue ball of extremity? The hook in Sonic Advance 3 is that you can play as any two of the five heroes (Sonic, Tails, Amy, Knuckles, and Cream) at the same time with a friend controlling the second character on a second GBA. The catch is that in single-player mode, you can’t switch to the secondary hero; they’re mostly just there for backup and show, and to help you perform special combo moves unique to each duo. The way you progress through levels has also changed a bit as well. Rather than simply moving from act to act in a linear fashion, the game now features a “hub” world that connects each stage’s three acts and boss level. Hub worlds also contain mini-games—if you can find them—that earn you bonuses like extra lives. But despite these changes,



PROTIP: Always take the highest road possible. Not only will you find the best power-ups, but you’ll also avoid meeting certain instant death at the bottom of the level.

	GRAPHICS	4.0	FUN FACTOR	3.5
	SOUND	4.0		
	CONTROL	3.5		

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban

Harry’s third year at Hogwarts begins when mass-murdering sorcerer Sirius Black escapes from the wizard prison Azkaban, which may quickly put an end to the career of the young magic man. For Potter’s protection, the mysterious, soul-stealing Dementors arrive at Hogwarts, which only heightens the tension. While the franchise on the GBA still seems way compared to deeper handheld RPGs, Prisoner of Azkaban’s faithfulness to the book, mesmerizing graphics, and captivating score are a treat for Potter fans.

Unlike the GBA version of Chamber of Secrets, which took the form of a weak isometric action/adventure, Azkaban is a turn-based RPG with the added appeal of being able to connect to the GameCube and race owls.



In Prisoner of Azkaban, you can now play as Ron Weasley and Hermione!

You’ll have to attend wizard classes to learn new magical spells, take on side-quests, explore Hogwarts to find wizard collector cards, hang out with Hagrid, and drink potions while leaping into random turn-based battles to gain experience and power. The other new game hook is the ability to control Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger after they join your party; each character has magical skills that Harry doesn’t. For example, Ron can cast spells that illuminate dark areas and reveal hidden passages, while Hermione can repair bridges and staircases that are otherwise impassable. Characters are designed to complement one another, and it’s cool to juggle them and figure out who is best suited for the challenge at hand. Azkaban is simplistic yet delightful for Potter fans—and it’s one of the few games you’ll play in which you have to go to class.—*Iron Monkey*

E ■ Developed by Amaze Entertainment ■ Published by EA Games ■ \$29.99 ■ Available now ■ RPG ■ 2 players



Are the sinister-looking Dementors friend or foe? Perhaps a bit of both.

	GRAPHICS	4.0	FUN FACTOR	3.0
	SOUND	4.0		
	CONTROL	4.0		

Dragon Ball Z: Supersonic Warriors

“Disma” appropriately describes how Dragon Ball Z fans felt when they bared witness to Talkatsu—and even more so when they bought it. Luckily, specialty game stores allow trade-ins, and with Supersonic Warriors coming your way, now just might be the time to take advantage of them. Supersonic Warriors takes the DBZ fighter back into the two-dimensional era. Your favorite characters are animated 2D sprites, but nevertheless, they are fair representations, equipped with sound bits from the American translation of the original cartoon. The music score brings back memories from Nintendo’s 16-bit glory days, which is pretty impressive considering the GBA’s audio limitations.

“Supersonic” implies fast and intense fighting action. The game features a variety of battle scenarios—Story, Challenge, Link Versus, and Z Battle—but they don’t seem very different from one another. No matter how you slice ‘em, they all feel like you’re just pitted in fight after fight. However, alternative endings to your chosen hero’s story is something to look forward to, especially if you’re a fan who’s tired of seeing the same cartoon episodes appearing in your DBZ games. There are even battles that resemble tag-team matches, which take a nice stab at reinventing the Dragon Ball feel.

Although Supersonic plays the way DBZ games were meant to be played, getting over the repetitiveness might be difficult. Despite that, the continuous button mashing that infuses the famous yet most curious aerial acrobatics that those crazy DBZ fighters perform gives you pretty much everything you need to simulate the Saiyan art of combat.—*Test Monkey*

PROTIP: Perform supercharged attacks at close range to decrease the likelihood of your opponent dodging them.

T ■ Developed by Bandai ■ Published by Atari ■ \$29.99 ■ Available now ■ Action ■ 2 players



PROTIP: Charge! Charge! Charge your Chit! However, alternative endings to your chosen hero’s story is something to look forward to, especially if you’re a fan who’s tired of seeing the same cartoon episodes appearing in your DBZ games. There are even battles that resemble tag-team matches, which take a nice stab at reinventing the Dragon Ball feel.

	GRAPHICS	3.5	FUN FACTOR	3.5
	SOUND	3.5		
	CONTROL	3.5		

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The logo for the Street Racing Syndicate (SRG) is a stylized, metallic-looking emblem. It features the letters 'SRG' in a large, bold, italicized font with a 3D effect. Below the letters, the words 'STREET RACING SYNDICATE' are written in a smaller, sans-serif font. The entire logo is set against a dark background with a grid pattern.

SRSgame.com

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PlayStation 2

[illegible]

Mega Man Battle Network 4 Red Sun

Once again, Lan and Mega Man return to save the world from impending doom. This time, the virus-annihilating duo must stop a shady organization from hurling an apocalypse-inducing asteroid into the Earth. For those new to the Battle Network series, the game is an RPG/action/strategy hybrid where players assume the role of a boy named Lan, who, together with his cyber alter ego, Mega Man, invariably must save the world time after time.

Mega Man Battle Network 4 Red Sun features several new enhancements to the series' traditional battle interface. The Dark Soul system enables Mega Man to use Dark Chips when he's hit four times in a row. These chips are extremely powerful but permanently consume 1 HP every time they're used, and if Mega Man's HP is reduced to zero, he'll be consumed with the dark power and go berserk. The Soul Union system replaces the previous Navl Skin system and permits players to collect Navl souls to augment Mega Man's abilities one time during battle. Countering an enemy attack enables players to obtain Full Synchro status, which doubles your next attack-chips' power.



PRO TIP: Use Area Grab Chips to limit the enemy's actions and give yourself more area to maneuver.

Unfortunately, as with the story goes, little has changed in this latest set up. You can expect to talk to every single character in order to trigger an obscure text cut-scene, which reveals goals that are aimless and not plot specific. Fans of the Battle Network series will delight in the further adventures of Lan and Mega Man, but everyone else is warned to stay clear.—Rice Burner

E Developed and published by Capcom ■ \$29.95 ■ Available now ■ Action/RPG ■ 2 players



PRO TIP: During your first boss battle, endure his attacks for five turns without dying, and he'll leave and you'll acquire your first Dark Chip.

Players are still forced to take part in the many tedious tasks issued to progress through the game's extremely linear set up. You can expect to talk to every single character in order to trigger an obscure text cut-scene, which reveals goals that are aimless and not plot specific. Fans of the Battle Network series will delight in the further adventures of Lan and Mega Man, but everyone else is warned to stay clear.—Rice Burner

	GRAPHICS	3.0	FUN FACTOR
	SOUND	2.5	
	CONTROL	3.0	



PRO TIP: Keep your enemies at a safe distance to give yourself adequate time and space for evasive maneuvering.

performance and monotonous sound effects did nothing to enhance the gameplay, but perhaps they had to be sacrificed in order to enhance the overall smoothness.

Taking an FPS back to its roots may be one of the best measures a mobile device like the N-Gage can take. First-person-shooter fans may demand a lot these days, but nothing is ever as important as the fluidity in gameplay. So for all of you who don't get enough of shooters at home, here's your chance to take one on the road.—Test Monkey

T Developed by Torus Games ■ Published by Nokia ■ \$34.99 ■ Available now ■ Shooting ■ 4 players

Ashen

N Let's face it: Mobile games were mainly created as a solution to the bored commuter. Meaning, when you're at home with a choice between playing a first-person shooter on a large screen versus a dinky handheld screen, you're more likely to choose the big guy. Ashen for the Nokia N-Gage is the cure for both PC and console gamers who just can't get enough of FPSes.

If you remember how the first Doom or Wolfenstein looked, you pretty much have an idea of what to expect from Ashen—you just have to imagine yourself punching keypads to move and look around. Amazingly, the amount of detail put into the maps makes the graphics far from boring. And although the game's alien monsters hardly ever show any personality, it's still an improvement from what we saw in Red Faction for the N-Gage. Needless to say, however, the arid musical per-



PRO TIP: Consistently activating your ghost vision could prevent unpleasant surprises from occurring.

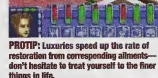
	GRAPHICS	4.0	FUN FACTOR
	SOUND	2.5	
	CONTROL	3.0	

The Sims: Bustin' Out

N From running errands to decorating the home, The Sims always have a way of keeping their fans busy for hours; so it makes sense that they wouldn't lose that edge even when they're on the road.

The core nature of the game remains intact—make your Sims while you attend to their personal needs according to the desired lifestyle. In addition, missions and mini-games crop up as an alternate source of income. And from this comes versatility in gameplay, which is definitely a bonus if not a relief to those who dread the thought of running more errands during possibly the only time they have to themselves—their commute.

However, not everything is peachy keen for the traveling Sims as they have packed lightly in the visual and audio departments. Each gender has been confined to one outfit with a variety of colors to choose from; let's just hope the other Sims didn't pick the same hairstyle. The Sims still carry their familiar tunes, and they all still speak the same Sim language, but they don't seem to speak it fluently as their vocabulary is limited to short grunts and giggles. Other sound effects are often hardly noticeable.



PRO TIP: Luxuries speed up the rate of restoration from corresponding ailments—don't hesitate to treat yourself to the finer things in life.

T Developed by Maxis ■ Published by EA Games ■ \$34.99 ■ Available now ■ Simulation ■ 2 players



PRO TIP: Keep workin' those muscles—a body in shape will result in a decrease in exhaustion rate, so you can do more in a day.

	GRAPHICS	3.5	FUN FACTOR
	SOUND	3.5	
	CONTROL	3.5	

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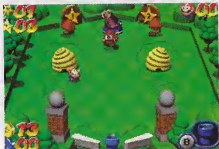
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Mario Pinball

Look at these screen shots. Now do a double take. Okay, look at them again. Yeah, we thought they were from the GameCube, too, but alas, they are from the upcoming Mario Pinball handheld, bringing to mind a question Tokyo Drifter once asked: Are there magical elves inside the GBA? In Mario Pinball, the part-time plumber/full-time dimension hopper gets compressed into a pinball and



hurled into delirious jungle, arctic, and Egyptian tables, where he must bonk, bop, and bash Monty Moles, Goombas, man-eating plants, and pissed penguins for points, stars, and the greater glory of the Mushroom Kingdom. Nintendo is promising a pinball game unlike any other as you bounce-battle bosses, collect keys, and buy items in single-screen (no scrolling!) isometric tables that will boast some of the most gorgeous graphics to fit in your palm.—Iron Monkey

■ First Look ■ Developed and published by Nintendo
■ Target release date: 2004



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Pokémon FireRed and Pokémon LeafGreen

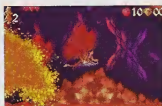
Already monstrous hits in Japan, the newest (and oldest) installments of the Pokémon franchise will be unleashed later this year. In the same way Metroid Fusion was a remake of the original game with elements of later Metroid fare mixed in, both FireRed and LeafGreen are heavily tweaked renditions of the original Pokémon Red and Pokémon Green with elements of subsequent entries like Sapphire and Ruby. The characters, trainers, and story events are unchanged from the original, but you now have a more robust palette of moves, different abilities, and more characters than before. The visuals are also undergoing a major facelift, the sound design is getting an overhaul, and all the monsters from previous Pokémon games

will be at your disposal. The games will also come packaged with the Game Boy Advance Wireless Adapter, enabling players to trade, battle, and even text message without cables.—Iron Monkey

■ First Look
■ Developed and published by Nintendo
■ Target release date: 2004



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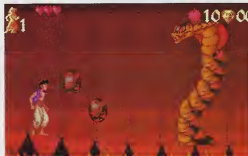
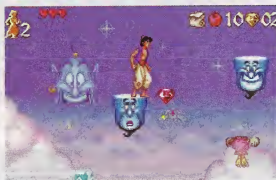


Disney's Aladdin

Originally released on the Super NES, Disney's Aladdin (believe it or not) was a damn fun platformer in which you got to partner up with a monkey and ride floating carpets through some trippy places like ancient pyramids and the inside of a genie's lamp.

Gamers loved the engaging gameplay and copious amounts of hidden items, while fans of the film were enchanted by lovely sound design and crisp graphics that captured the essence of the film. The port will improve on all aspects of the design while throwing in some bonus levels to boot. Sure, the whole deal sounds good and all, but can somebody please tell me: What kind of a world do we live in where Capcom re-releases Aladdin on the Game Boy Advance and LucasArts still hasn't ported the SNES Star Wars Trilogy?—Iron Monkey

■ First Look ■ Developed and published by Capcom
■ Target release date: October



Yu-Gi-Oh! Reshef Of Destruction

Yu-Gi-Oh! The Sacred Cards, is a combination of role-playing and card-battle games in which intrepid players must face Reshef, a malevolent being bent on plunging the world into a chaotic nightmare of horror and devastation. The adventure features an all-new story line rife with plot twists and turns in which you will participate in card battles against over 100 other duelists with 800 unique cards, including all three Egyptian god cards. Between bouts, you must travel the world to gain experience and build decks by buying, selling, and betting battle cards. Yu-Gi-Oh! Reshef of Destruction will include three exclusive limited-edition Yu-Gi-Oh cards: Dark Magician Knight, Knight's Title, and Sage's Stone, and will be released in time for the Yu-Gi-Oh movie, which will hit American theaters later this year.—Iron Monkey

■ **First Look**

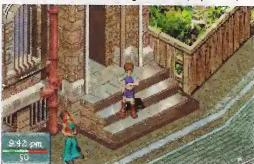
■ **Developed and published by** Konami

■ **Target release date:** June



The Urbz: Sims in the City

Say goodbye to track housing and strip malls—The Sims are moving out of the suburbs and into the big city in the sequel to The Sims: Bustin' Out. In The Urbz, you'll again control a single Sim. Only this time, you're a window washer who has to make his way up the corporate stepladder in bustling Miniopolis to take on the deep pockets of Daddy Bigbucks, a tycoon with plans to financially devastate the city in order to fatten his Swiss bank account. Of course, you'll meander about town, talk to other Sims, and do favors in exchange for dollars, reputation, and Motive satisfaction. In between greasing elbows with money-hungry geeks, you'll play mini-games with eyebrow-raising names like Moogoo Monkey



Madness, participate in motocross races, alter your mite-sized simulacrum's consciousness in sensory deprivation tanks, enjoy adrenaline rushes on your personal skydiving machine, or do God knows what in your Boogaloo Box.

Players will be able to link GBAs in the Multiplayer Café to compete in head-to-head mini-games and trade prized possessions, as well as unlock new and as of yet unannounced features. Bustin' Out on the GBA was a hell of a lot better than we expected; can't wait to kill time with this one.—Iron Monkey

■ **First Look** ■ **Developed by** Griptonite Games ■ **Published by** EA Games ■ **Target release date:** Fall 2004



Kirby & the Amazing Mirror

When a pervasive force threatens the peaceful Kingdom of Mirrors and all its magical inhabitants, the globular self-professed friend to all children multiplies into four different Kirbys to face off against sword-wielding shadows, shark gobblers, and megaliths in his newest adventure. In Kirby & the Amazing Mirror, up to four players will be able to control a different version of Kirby via link cable and tackle the adventure as a group. In

single-player mode, the three other alter egos will be computer-controlled. The platformer will also introduce all-new copying abilities like arrow-shooting and smashing melee attacks to keep things fresh for longtime fans. Players will also be able to compete in fast mini-games like Crackly Hack and Speed Eaters when the game ships toward the end of the year.—Iron Monkey

■ **First Look** ■ **Developed and published by** Nintendo

■ **Target release date:** Fourth Quarter 2004



Boktai 2: Solar Boy Django



Before its release, Konami's Boktai turned heads for two reasons. First, the hands of Hideo "Metal Gear" Kojima crafted it. Second, the GBA cart contained some sort of solar-detecting thingamajig that enabled your character to harness the power of the sun for his zombie-blasting gun. At first, the game reeked of mere novelty, but after playing it for a while, it was clear that Kojima fashioned a masterfully compelling puzzle/action/stealth game around the concept.

For its follow-up, the innovative solar-sensing technology is back, and young monster hunter cum sun worshipper, Django, has a selection of over 60 modifiable solar-driven weapons to use against the bad guys. Kojima is placing heavier emphasis on RPG aspects so that Django's interactions with characters will affect his progress throughout the game, while the game's environments and roster of foes will be much larger than before. —*Iron Monkey*

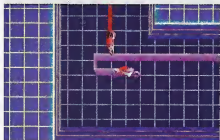
■ **First Look** ■ Developed and published by Konami
■ **Target release date:** September



Tron 2.0 Killer App

Prepare to enter the realm of the Master Control Program, which some fans will no doubt remember from the early 1980s fantasy film *Tron*. Tron 2.0 Killer App puts players in the role of The User, who assumes control of digital warriors Tron or Mercury. The User must battle The Corruptor (an evil computer program that is attempting to create an ultimate virus to subjugate the entire system). Each character will have their own alternate story line, weapon selections, and game modes.

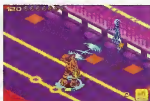
Killer App will feature over 30 levels of third-person isometric action and first-person vehicle combat and Light Cycle racing. Players will be able to customize their characters with 100 upgrade



program chips as well as unlock classic Tron arcade games, a variety of multiplayer games, such as Light Cycle racing, and combat games that utilize the Tank and Recognizer—the arch-looking vehicle.

With a surprising amount of variety and depth, Killer App is looking worthy of its movie progenitor and will be out this fall. —*Rice Burner*

■ **First Look** ■ Developed by Digital Eclipse ■ Published by Buena Vista Interactive ■ **Target release date:** Fall 2004



The Nightmare Before Christmas: The Pumpkin King

Tim Burton's classic film *The Nightmare Before Christmas* will make its handheld debut in *The Pumpkin King*. Jack Skellington finds his role reversed from the original film as former holiday king Oogie Boogie threatens Jack's town of Halloween. Oogie has ruined his own August holiday of celebrating bugs and now is determined to take over Halloween from Jack utilizing his various insect servants.



The Pumpkin King is a third-person action game and will further reveal the back-story of Jack and how he became *The Pumpkin King*. The game also adds it's own chapter to *The Nightmare Before Christmas* lore. Jack will be able to use various Halloween-inspired abilities and weapons, such as Bat Boomerangs and Jack-O-Lanterns, in a variety of locales, including Halloween Town and Dr. Finkelstein's Castle.

It's too early to tell, but with the huge cult fanfare still revolving around this movie, it will be interesting to see how this magical film gets translated into a handheld game. —*Rice Burner*

■ **First Look** ■ Developed by TOSE ■ Published by Buena Vista Interactive ■ **Target release date:** Fall 2004



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Madden NFL 2005^{EA}

Defending a Winning Tradition



When you're the league champ everyone comes gunning for you with their "A" game. In 2004, Madden NFL sold more than any other video game, topping over 4 million copies. So what's the strategy that developer EA Tiburon plans to use to remain king of the hill? Dee-fense!

Defensive Smarts

"This year, we want to give players the same tools and abilities to make big plays on defense that we've been giving to the offense for the past few years," says Jeremy Strauser, producer for Madden. "We want it to be fun to play defense as it has been to play offense."

One way to do that would be to make the artificial intelligence (A.I.) smarter. Madden's defensive A.I. has been fortified to put defenders in the right position more often to make plays. The concept is called "assists" and is most frequently used in auto racing games to keep cars stable on the road. For example, if the offense calls a running play, pursuit angle assists will automatically direct each defender to find an optimal line of attack on a ball carrier as he moves down the field. Against passes, coverage assists will make A.I.-controlled defenders go for a swat or an interception if a pass comes into their range.



Player models have been revamped.



The Hit Stick indicator lets you know when it's time to bring it!



The story of Madden NFL 2005 will be defense!



Tony Bruno of Fox Sports Radio reports the dirt on your franchise on EA Sports Radio in Story Line Central. Beautiful, man.

Stick It to 'Em!

Don't worry, the A.I. isn't going to do it all for you. Defensive game controls get a cool upgrade called simply the Hit Stick that increases the opportunity for a single defender to make a big game-changing play. Once you maneuver a selected defender into position, you can flick the right analog stick to try to deliver a monster hit.

Notice we said "try." Although you might make a big stop or even cause a fumble, if you miss, you might tumble out of the play or wind up with a face full of turf. "You can't run all over the field flicking the stick as you go," Strauser warns. "You'll just end up taking yourself out of the play."

This is a timing-based system that enables you to flick the right analog stick to make a defensive line crash to any side or all rush to the outside. You can rush either outside linebacker or call an all-out blitz.

Defensive backs get their own suite of refined moves. Depending on the defensive play you've called, you can shift the safeties to either side. You can also focus on individual matchups of DBs on receivers and make your defenders play off the receivers or use bump-and-run coverage. Finally, if your safeties are in zone coverage, you can decide to double-team any receiver.



Mini-games are back, and this year they affect player ratings.



Call for a double-team on the opposition's star receiver.

If all that sounds like a ton of stuff to analyze and execute prior to the snap—you're right. Welcome to the Madden NFL in 2005! But don't worry, you can make some global, pregame defensive decisions, too, such as pre-setting the DBs to double-team the opposition's star player all the time.

Looking Like Football

Madden 2005 is also prepared to put on a show! New animations provide more types of sacks and slick refinements like making players hop over piles once a play is dead.

Player bodies are much more defined with shoulders and arm muscles more accurately proportioned. Jerseys wrinkle and move more realistically, and even shoulder pads move independently of the rest of a player's body.

NFL stadiums also get a Madden makeover. All stadiums have been rebuilt to scale with the player models. Real-time weather effects and time-of-day lighting will change during the course of a game. Additionally, the traditionally sparse sidelines will finally get the full visual treatment with a full-team bench and other sideline attractions. In Franchise mode, you even get to design your own fanatic fans who appear in the game cinemas.

NFL Drama

Besides the fan builder, Franchise gets a few more neat upgrades. Storyline Central is an impressive new feature that ultimately will put a new layer of strategy on top of sports franchise modes. It brings all the individual drama that occurs every day in real-life sports, such as coaching changes, contract disputes, or playing-time issues, and makes it affect the performance of your franchise.

"We've even implemented a player morale system," Strauser says, "where players are either happy or unhappy based on many different types of events, and that in turn affects all sorts of different things on the team, whether it's team chemistry or individual player ratings during a game."

How will you as owner know all this? Through the media of course; just like in real life! Madden 2005 will "publish" 32 unique newspapers all based in your team's home town that all report headlines that reflect your franchise moves. Even Tony Bruno on Fox Sports Radio gets in on the act as host for Madden's EA Sports Radio show. The show plays in the background as you operate in Franchise mode. In his show, Tony runs down the good and the bad moves you're making with your franchise!

Winning Form

With or without the drama, Madden NFL is one of those games that seems to take on a life of its own. "It's like Madden's a part of the popular culture now, and we have to live up to that," says Strauser. "The last thing we want to do is let people down. Every year, we look at the game as a whole new product, not just an upgrade." With the improvements on the defensive side of the football this year, Madden 2005 is certainly looking like the complete package.—*Brother Buzz*

■ **Update** ■ Developed by EA Tiburon
■ **Published** by EA Sports ■ **Target release date:** August



You change defensive formations and individual coverages at the line of scrimmage.



Not all the A.I. improvements are relegated to defense; the running game will be smoother.

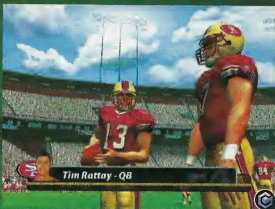


The offense remains intact, although you can shift formations at the line.

Look Out, Raider Nation!



You've seen them on every national television broadcast, and you think you could never, say, paint your face in tiger stripes, strip down to the torso in zero-degree weather, and howl like a ruminant for the Bengals...or, Bengals. But deep down inside, you know you want to. Create-A-Fan enables you to make a fanatic fan with team colors, face paint, crazy hair, props, hats, and the whole nine yards. Save your fan in Franchise mode, and he shows up in the game cinemas, too!



With dynamic time-of-day lighting, such details as shadows or glare will change throughout the game.

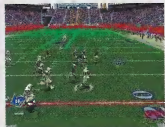


ESPN NFL 2005

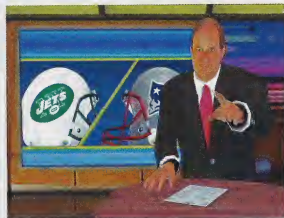
ESPN NFL continues to fortify its credentials as one of the best pro-football franchises in the game. The preview version of ESPN NFL 2005 revealed some great-looking improvements, and although it didn't have all the features available to play, it hinted at great things to come.

Spit and Polish

The early version looked gorgeous. According to developer Visual Concepts, all the player models have been redone to mimic real-life movement. It has developed a "muscle rig" system so that a player's "skeleton" and "muscles" are independent systems but move together just like the human body. The effect during gameplay really makes it look as if you're watching a football game on TV.



Already enjoying a well-deserved reputation for showcasing up-close views of player faces sans helmets, the preview also wheeled and dealt a good mix of presnap and post-play camera views and cinemas. In fact, last year's 40 cut-scenes have ballooned up to more than 200. High-fives, downcast looks after botched plays, first-down "chops," and quick cuts to the sideline bring to life all the personality and drama of the real game.



The drive toward realism also extends off the field, too. This year, "virtual" Chris Berman puts his muscle behind the entertainment value more than ever. ESPN's star sports-show host gets the graphic reality treatment just like the players. Moreover, Visual Concepts is doing a fine job of harnessing his signature announcing style for accurate reporting of any team matchups, weather conditions, and coaching strategies you might select.

All the Right Moves

There are also some very cool moves on the field. The preview build featured excellent passing and running. The controls felt sharp and precise like they're already primed for opening day.

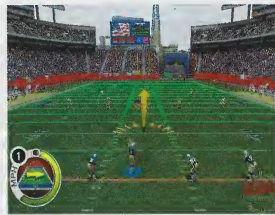
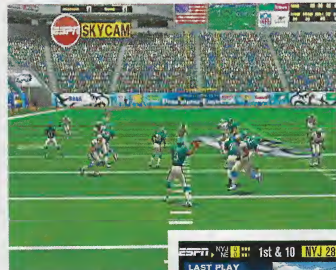
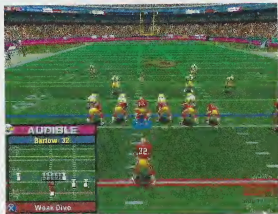
One thing you'll notice right off the bat is that ballcarriers no longer make zany, momentum-defying quick cuts. You can't just flick the stick to bust a hyper-speed change of direction. New motion-capture visuals and animations have made offensive moves much more fluid and natural looking so that cuts and cutbacks appear almost eerily realistic.

Super Bowl Dreams

There's no doubt that despite its well-deserved reputation for quality gameplay, ESPN NFL moves through the season with a chip on its shoulder due to the formidable presence of that "other" NFL game. If this build is any indication, ESPN NFL 2005 should put on another fine performance this season, and it could...go...all...the...way.—Brother Buzz

■ Hands-On ■ Developed by Visual Concepts
■ Published by Sega Sports ■ Target release date: August

All screens shown here are from the PlayStation 2 version.



Points per game: 20.9 Years on earth: 19.3

3-EXPLOSIVE™

LeBron James has taken his game and his gum to the next level. He chews Bubblicious Carnival Cotton Candy™ because it's loaded with explosive taste.

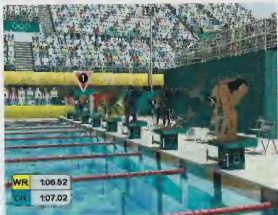


Billed as the official video game of the Olympic games, Athens 2004 from 989 Sports is hoping to ride the enthusiasm generated by the time-honored global competition. Nothing generates excitement like national pride, so 64 countries are selectable with 800 unique characters to help distinguish the athletes. This is welcome news for fans as similar games in the past have had mostly the same generic characters.

The preview version allowed play in almost every event, and things are quite polished already. Swimming, weightlifting, and track events all have the familiar "tap on two buttons like a madman" gameplay element. However, there are some twists that keep it interesting like a small break from button mashing in weightlifting, the

dance game-like controls for gymnastics, and the targeting of archery and shooting. All told, 25 events will be selectable in the final version. As an added bonus, you can use a dance-pad controller to really get into the game, and up to four players can compete through the use of a multitap.

The visuals and audio are also quite polished at this point with impressively detailed stadiums packed with roaring crowds. The athletes animate smoothly, and the camera angles give you the feeling that you're watching a telecast. Athens 2004 should hit stores in advance of the actual Olympics, giving you time to play out your own drama first.—Tokyo Drifter



■ **Hands-On** ■ Developed and published by 989 Sports
 ■ **Target release date:** July

Outlaw Golf 2

X At first glance, Outlaw Golf looked like your garden variety, over-the-top take on sports with predictably outrageous characters. A closer inspection surprisingly revealed an innovative swing mechanic,

challenging courses, and attempts at humor that were actually funny. Thus, developer Hypnotix earned a loyal following. Outlaw Golf 2 hopes to expand that audience even further with refinements to its winning formula. The zany cast of characters returns with at least one new face for a total of 11 selectable players. That isn't much of an upgrade, but the number of courses makes up for it with five new links and vast redesigns for the three returning courses.

The analog-stick swing mechanic is back in action as is the composure meter, which monitors how well your golfer is coping with stress. Get too frazzled, and your swing becomes much harder to control; do well, and your confidence rises. You can still beat up your caddy to let off steam and regain composure that way, too. Brand-new to the sequel is a golf cart-driving system that also lets you get your cool back by performing donuts, slides, and jumps. Xbox Live support will be in full effect with four-player simultaneous action and leader-board uploads.

—Tokyo Drifter

■ **First Look** ■ Developed by Hypnotix
 ■ **Published by** Global Star
 ■ **Target release date:** October



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NCAA Football 2005

EA Tiburon has earned a rep for delivering sure things, and NCAA Football 2005 is, once again, just as awesome as you'd expect.

EA XBOX Excellence is simply expected with EA Sports' college-football series, and like the sun rising in the east each morning, NCAA Football 2005 shines brightly on the gridiron once again. Along with some razor-sharp tuning of last year's little flaws, this year's powerhouse posts big numbers with new features that bring home-field advantage to life, add a layer of depth to Dynasty mode, and even provide a touch of humor with customizable signs for fans in the stands.

Storm Their Field

EA Tiburon continually defies the "if it ain't broke" adage by making each year's NCAA Football game substantially better than the last. This season, the development team was wise enough to mend a few details that were actually broke. Kick-off returns provide more opportunities for breaking free, avoiding last year's repetitive shutdowns. Running the ball feels much better, too—halfbacks can cut more sharply than other less agile players, threading their way through seams without getting stuck on teammates. Collision detection is improved, but you'll still see limbs passing through limbs and players twitching robotically between plays.

Overall, NCAA 2005 is a huge upgrade—if you played the hell out of 2004, you'll find it hard to appreciate. The addition of Xbox Live—NCAA is the first-ever EA game to support it—will get the biggest headlines, but it's not the biggest addition. That honor falls to the new focus on home-field advantage. When playing in a loud stadium, visiting teams face a rowdily vibrating controller, shaking screen, and players whose lack of composure causes bad plays. If you think you can handle it, you're in for a surprise—the overall effect is huge, really adding to the challenge in key moments like kicking a field goal. A Stadium Pulse meter lets the home team amp up the crowd, and you can even create signs for fans in the stands to wave after big plays—that's a whole lot of smack just waiting to be talked.

Tear Down Their Posts

Home field comes into play before the snap, too—the new Matchup Stick lets strategists determine which players are getting rattled and which aren't, enabling you to call plays aimed at exploiting those weaknesses. Other cool new stuff includes a new kick-off camera, hot routes for running plays, and coaching during time-outs. Dynasty mode is also much richer, thanks to new elements like recruiting nonfootball athletes; dividing your budget between recruiting, training, and discipline; and disciplining players who miss practice or get into trouble.

Heckle Their Band

In the face-off between the three systems, the GameCube version will surprise you with its sharp graphics, but the lack of online play and that sports-unfriendly controller doom it to a third-place finish. Now that the game supports Xbox Live, that version is tops with its superior graphics, but there's nothing shabby about the PS2 version. The choice is really more about which hardware and controller you prefer, rather than any big differences between the versions.

As a whole, the graphics and sounds were upgraded in solid but not ground-breaking ways, ranging from roaring crowds in loud stadiums to better animations and lighting. The excellent controls benefit from new moves like big hits and the other new features. When the ball's kicked off, there's just no way to go wrong with NCAA Football 2005.—Air Hendrix

PRO TIP: During time-outs, coach the unit that will be most important in the upcoming series of plays—not necessarily the one that's performing the worst.



PRO TIP: Use hot routes to flip a running play without visibly flipping it when the O overloads one side.



The new Matchup Stick lets you scout for potential player mismatches that you can exploit once you start the play.



PRO TIP: When recruiting for a low-prestige team, focus on the pool of interested recruits for your best chance at high-caliber candidates.

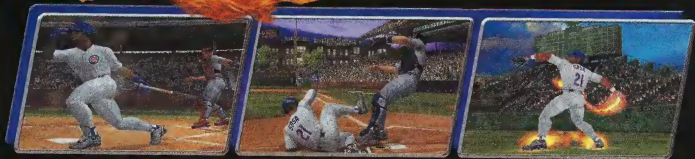
GAMEPRO EDITORS' CHOICE			
EA	GRAPHICS	4.5	FUN FACTOR
	SOUND	4.0	5.0
X	GRAPHICS	5.0	FUN FACTOR
	SOUND	4.0	5.0
G	GRAPHICS	5.0	FUN FACTOR
	SOUND	4.5	4.5



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PlayStation 2



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Smash Court Tennis Pro Tournament 2

EF While it offers vast improvements over the original, Smash Court 2 still needs its racquet restrung for better ball control.

Fresh Can of Balls

Certainly Sega's Virtua Tennis series is top seed in this racquet sport. Last year, Smash Court attempted to oust the tennis legend with a new way of playing the game, but it failed miserably. This season, the contender is back, out to show that tennis is still anyone's game. To start, Smash Court 2 sports an extensive career mode where you train and attempt to rise through the ranks in the tennis world. Although there are a limited number of training games to help build your stats, it's how you play the tournaments in this mode that really stands out. Rather than torturing your fingers through an entire match, you instead play only the turning points of a game, or, at most, one set. During a turning



PRO TIP: Build your power and topspin attributes first.



PRO TIP: The ball is harder to hit the lower it is to the ground. Use this to your advantage and hit a drop shot while your opponent is at the net.



PRO TIP: For the first year, don't worry about keeping your stamina up. Even when you're low on energy, you can successfully complete all of the training and the lower-profile tournaments.

point, you're asked to complete a "mission," which, if done correctly, earns you experience points to win the game faster. It's an ingenious way of forcing players to mix up their tennis style and a great way to better understand the mental aspect of the game.

Double Fault

But old habits are, unfortunately, hard to break, and Smash Court is once again weighed down by the same control scheme. To win a game, you must time your ball hits. Press the button at the right moment, and you'll swing a "nice" hit. Press too early or too late, and the ball will lose speed and go somewhere else. True, ball timing is part of the tennis game, but it absolutely doesn't take precedence over ball placement. Without this annoying setup, Smash Court 2 would have been an ace.

Even with the clever new missions and spruced-up visuals that make watching a ball go back and forth worthwhile, control is the most important part in tennis; and in this game, Smash Court faults once again. —Four-Eyed Dragon

E Developed and published by Namco
E \$39.99 ■ Available now ■ Tennis ■ 4 players

EF	GRAPHICS	4.0	FUN FACTOR	3.5
	SOUND	3.5		3.0
	CONTROL	3.0		3.5

Euro 2004

EF While European football fans crowd sports bars to watch friendly matches in anticipation of Euro 2004, over in the States, the tournament hardly warrants a whisper—and like the real thing, most will hardly notice EA's Euro 2004 when it hits retailers in the U.S.

Beckham Has A Different Hairdo, Same Style

There isn't anything particularly wrong about EA Sports' latest soccer endeavor. However, with the game mechanics largely resembling FIFA 2004, it lacks a sense of newness. As in FIFA, players still occasionally step in their tracks to trap a pass, and matches retain a pace that Winning Eleven fans will find too slow and rigid. Diving headers and bicycle kicks are a welcome addition, but due to the difficulty in timing them, they're more of a novelty to gaze at in replays than a match breaker. Player morale is a compelling feature that could greatly enhance future soccer titles, but it doesn't make a noticeable impact this time around.



PRO TIP: Scoring goals is a bit harder than in FIFA 2004, but headers and direct kicks off centering passes still seem to do the trick.



PRO TIP: Centering the ball too close to the goal is a sure failure against the omnipotent goalie.



PRO TIP: When you're close to the goal, aim for the corner. Shoot at mid to low strength, and you're pretty much guaranteed to score.

Zidane Ain't Ziggin'

Euro 2004 features a great variety of teams with 51 to choose from—though Holland has a conspicuously fake team roster with player names like "Ned 20." In addition to the standard single match, practice, and tournament modes, the game includes a Fantasy mode, where players make their own all-star roster, and a Situation mode, enabling players to alter the score, time remaining, and number of penalty cards handed out. Online play is limited only to the PC version, so you'd better bring your buddies over when you get bored of playing against the computer. The graphics aren't much different from those in FIFA with players still having that stiff, android feel.

With a smattering of new features, dihard EA Sports soccer fans will undoubtedly pick up the game and find joy in the subtle tweaks that have streamlined gameplay—fair-weather fans, however, will want to wait for FIFA 2005. —Funky Zealot

E Developed by EA Canada ■ Published by EA Sports ■ \$39.99 ■ Available now ■ Soccer ■ 2 players

All screens shown here are from the Xbox version.

EF	GRAPHICS	4.0	FUN FACTOR	4.0
	SOUND	3.5		3.5
	CONTROL	4.0		3.5

X	GRAPHICS	4.5	FUN FACTOR	4.5
	SOUND	3.5		3.5
	CONTROL	4.0		3.5



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ROLE-PLAYER'S REALM

Kingdom Hearts II

PE All right, all you RPG people...when Square Enix told you it was making this role-playing game "Kingdom Hearts" with Disney way back in 2002, how many of you honestly expected the game to be good, much less great, much less fan-freakin'-tastic? Hmm, there don't seem to be too many hands raised. Well, at least this time we know what we're getting into with Kingdom Hearts II, especially as many of the same key development team members from the original game are working on this sequel, including Director and Character Designer Tetsuya Nomura (he created characters for Final Fantasy VII, VIII, X, and X-2, too) and Battle Director Yuichi Kanemori.

Magic Merger

The plot picks up two years after the original left off with Square-ish, key-wielding hero Sora joining Donald and Goofy in the modified Magic Kingdom to find the beloved things they have lost—Sora is looking for Kairi and Riku; Donald and Goofy are trying to track down their misplaced King. As you make your way through the



Square-Enix-Disney landscape, you'll once again encounter a goodly number of famous characters, including Hades and Hercules, Beauty and the Beast, Mickey (as a ninja), even Auron (sans glasses) from Final Fantasy X.

Mickey Mog

While we don't know much else yet about story details, battle system changes, what's become of that damnable Gummi Ship, or what specific new areas you'll encounter, we do know this: The Heartless aren't destroyed as you might have thought—they're still running around in some strange new form. The sequel also features a new masked baddie for you to contend with, who (as Square Enix vaguely hints) may or may not be someone you already know. The U.S. release date for Kingdom Hearts II is still to be determined, but it's safe to say that you won't be seeing it until 2005. Aw, shucks.—Star Dingo

■ First Look ■ Developed by Square Enix

■ Published by Square Enix U.S.A. ■ Target release date: 2005



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Star Ocean: Till the End of Time

FE In the year 772 (that's by the galactic calendar, not ours), humanity has found its way out into the stars and, in a move torn straight out of *Star Trek*, declared that any "underdeveloped" planets they encounter are to be left completely untouched. Into this universe is born a blue-haired boy named Fayt Leingod, a star-faring kid who starts off vacationing with his family and winds up skipped like a stone across this ocean of stars, bouncing from planet to planet looking to reunite with his loved ones, with only some helpful strangers and MMORPG-honed fighting skills around to help him survive.

Interplanetary Intermezzo

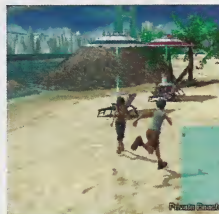
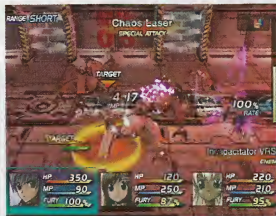
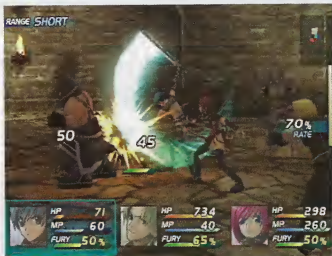
Square Enix's *Star Ocean: Till the End of Time* comes from the Xenosaga school of role-playing; it's an anime-inspired science-fiction epic loaded with lengthy cut-scenes ("acted" in real-time with full voice) that have you watching as much as, if not more than, you are playing—a good thing or a bad thing, depending on your perspective. The Phantasy Star-style mesh of medieval and futuristic is tied together by a refreshing real-time battle system that emphasizes action without sacrificing any of the spells, skills, and strategies you've come to expect in an RPG.

One of the most initially striking things about *Star Ocean's* combat is that each character in your party has a remarkably different feel (Fayt is a swordsman, Cliff is a hand-to-hand brawler, Nel uses "symbology", etc.), and you can switch among the three characters with you at any time during the battle with a simple button press. The characters' combos feel and look especially fluid, and as you learn skills, you can assign them to different controller/button inputs. Pulling off certain feats (winning a battle in under 10 seconds, killing everyone without getting hit) earns you Battle Trophies that can be saved to your memory card and goodies once you collect enough trophies.

A Deepness In the Sky

This "Director's Cut" edition features a few things that weren't in the original Japanese release, including two new characters, new dungeons, and a Vs. mode that lets you try out the game's standout battle system against a friend. As if the other 80 hours of game weren't enough.—*Star Dingo*

■ Hands-On ■ Developed by tri-Ace ■ Published by Square Enix U.S.A. ■ Target release date: August



Shadow Hearts: Covenant

FE Alas, poor Yuri, star of 2001's violent and brooding *Shadow Hearts*. He's been cursed by a dark cult, and the nifty monster-morphing abilities he acquired in his previous adventure have been seriously capped, giving him all the more reason to brood. In *Shadow Hearts: Covenant*, Yuri and his companions take another peek behind the veil and try to put a stop to the cult's actions during



World War I while recovering Yuri's powers along the way.

Shadow Hearts is a two-DVD monster with lots of the usual cinematic RPG bells and whistles like big CGI sequences and tons of voice acting. If you've played the original, the quirky timing-based Judgment Ring system returns here—only now with more room for combos and formations, as well as a magic system that lets characters cast any spell once it's been earned.—*Star Dingo*

■ **First Look** ■ Developed by Nautilus
■ Published by Midway ■ Target release date: Fall 2004



Champions of Norrath: Return to Arms

FE In this sequel to the original four-player *Champions*, the followers of the god Innoruuk (destroyed and shattered into little shards of pure evil at the end of the first game) are looking to gather all the scattered pieces of their dark lord. All the stuff that made the first game special is back again



in *Return to Arms*—four-player multi-tap and online support (with no fees!); tons of items and artifacts; and monsters to hack your way through. In addition to all that, *Return to Arms* adds

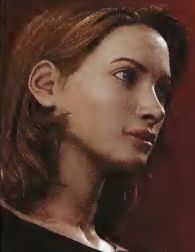


two new races (including the Yeh Shiri),

hyperpowered Epic items, and a medal system to unlock all sorts of secret stuff. Plus, if you have your old *Champions of Norrath* saves on your memory card or HDD, you can even import characters from the original game, making the level grind a little more bearable.—*Star Dingo*

■ **First Look** ■ Developed by Snowblind Studios
■ Published by Sony Online Entertainment
■ Target release date: Winter 2004

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Tales of Symphonia

Hey, who put the action game in my giant anime fantasy epic?!

Great story? Check. Cool characters? Check. Nifty-looking spells and unique graphics? Check. Nicely tuned challenge? Check. Big, game-altering twist in the middle? Check. Yup, *Tales of Symphonia* has just about got it all. The only quirk that prevents this RPG from entering the hallowed halls of RPG heaven is its battle system—some folks are gonna find it hard to take.

Amazing Stories of Lands Beyond

Tales of Symphonia (just one of a long-running series in Japan) is a deceptively cute, anime-inspired RPG infused with the same sort of heart, warmth, humor, sadness, and peril that mark a Rumiko Takahashi (*Ranma 1/2*, *Inuyasha*) story. The writing is among the best in the console-RPG business, especially given this is a Japanese port—the tragedies really strike home, and the characters all have distinct voices, speaking their lines with a welcome sense of subtle irony and self-awareness about RPG clichés.

The story centers around a young orphan student named Lloyd, a swordsman who decides to accompany the "Chosen One" (a half-angel friend from town) on her journey to regenerate the world. Along the way, he and his friends have to free humanity from the slavery of strange high-alien, half-eaten slavers called Desians. Not everything's what it seems, however, and the true nature of the Desians and the Chosen One makes for some truly fine RPG drama. In true Japanese fashion, the game is quite linear—in this post-KOTOR console landscape, more side-quests and options definitely would have been welcome.

What's on the Other Side?

The presentation gets a minus—the graphics are awesome, cel-shaded, and fluid with well-designed interior architecture, beautifully animated creatures with cool designs, and some really neat-looking spell effects. The only exception is the overworld, which strangely looks like it was torn from an N64 game. The voice acting and battle sound effects are great, too, even if the music won't leave much of a mark.

For many, the battle system will be the make-or-break point for *Symphonia*—it has as much in common with an action beat-em-up as it does an RPG. Individual character control is excellent—skills and spells can be mapped to different buttons and stick combinations, and guarding and changing targets all happen more smoothly than in many pure action games. The problem is that the sense of control gets lost as the other three characters in the party act, by necessity, on autopilot (though friends can control them if you have controllers plugged in). While sticklers for RPG freedom can dole out commands if they really want to, the system becomes clunky and burdensome once you try to micromanage. Jaded RPG gamers may welcome the hyper speed, but a lot of the joy of finding new skills and learning new spells is lost in the auto-respondent chaos.

Elves, Half and Whole

Stay for the story, characters, and the sights of Symphonia... but be wary of the action-heavy, automated battle system. The fate of the world may feel a little bit out of your hands.

—Star Dingo

T Developed by Namco Tales Studio | Published by Namco Homeentek | \$49.99 | Available now | RPG | 4 players



PROTIP: Map your characters' most powerful attacks to the "neutral" position in the D-Pad menu. That way, you can just smash all the buttons when your meter fills to do serious super-damage.



PROTIP: Once you free Undine, you have the option to go back to the other elemental shrines and make pacts with any of the other Summon Spirits so Sheena can use them.



PROTIP: During boss fights, it's suddenly a necessity to micromanage your otherwise automatic teammates. Have them heat and use powerful spells from the back while Lloyd handles the front.



PROTIP: When fighting more than one magic-user enemy, alternate between attacking them (instead of just concentrating on one) so that you're constantly interrupting their spells.



PROTIP: Dying or getting poisoned has a seriously negative effect on your grade. Try to avoid both if you want to get Grade points for EX Gems and Custom weapons.



The colorful, extra "Z button" conversations don't advance the plot and can be skipped, but they add a lot of flavor and flesh out the characters.

GAMEPRO EDITORS' CHOICE

GRAPHICS	4.5	FUN FACTOR
SOUND	4.5	
CONTROL	4.5	

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RED DEAD REVOLVER

BASICS

HEADSHOTS



Headshots are among the most difficult yet effective shots to pull off in the entire game. A good time to score a headshot is when an enemy is reloading or stunned from a punch because they give you the valuable time required to line them in your sights. When in close or at a distance from an enemy, move the crosshairs so the horizontal line is just slightly over an enemy's head (it may be orange instead of red). Once you've found that "sweet spot" (and you're on level footing), keep your weapon drawn and don't change the vertical position because you can score multiple headshots that add up to big money.

ALWAYS RELOAD



Whether you've fired six shots or only one, always reload when you're moving or taking cover. Also, remember to reload your pistol after a Duel (if you survive one, that is) because the action frequently picks up immediately when the Duel concludes.

FIRE: FRIEND AND FOE



Fire is your friend—and enemy. Seemingly aesthetic touches, such as campfires and blazing barns, can engulf your character in deadly

flames that make you a sitting duck and tear chunks off your Health meter. When playing as Shadow Wolf, try to use his flaming arrow Dead Eye attack on enemies who are bunched together. One caveat when playing as Shadow Wolf: Do not hit an enemy at point-blank range with a flaming arrow Dead Eye attack. If you do, chances are your struck enemy will run in your direction and set you ablaze, too. And, yes, you can catch on fire while riding a horse or bull.

PUNCH



Why waste bullets when a good blow to the head will work? When in close to an enemy, press the Punch button to club them to the ground. You can also perform a nasty two-hit combo: Get in close to an enemy, press the Punch button to smack 'em over the head, take one step back, aim, and fire. Your single shot should drill them straight in the noggin.

CROSSFIRES



Also, why waste bullets when enemies can shoot each other? In Chapters with multiple enemies occupying small spaces (such as Ghost Town), you can lure enemies into each other's firing lines.

BRIMSTONE



Each time you arrive at Brimstone, be sure to visit each store (Bank,

Red and friends ride onto the PlayStation 2 and Xbox with tons of secrets to unlock and bosses to defeat. In this ProStrategy Guide, we show you how to get through the toughest parts of the game and unlock Secret Characters, Showdown Locations, and more! BY MAJOR MIKE



Clothing, Saloon, General Store, Gunshop), talk to the people working there, and check out the items that are for sale. New items are added and others are taken away with each visit. Be sure to visit the Sheriff last.

CHAPTERS

Red Dead Revolver has 27 Chapters. Here is how to complete some of the most difficult ones.

CHAPTER 3 UGLY STREETFIGHT



When Ugly Chris appears and takes the sheriff hostage, circle around him, aim at his feet, and then fire when the sheriff's appendages aren't in the way.



When Chris hops on one foot, line up a shot on his head. The sheriff

should hit Chris in the stomach, which sends Chris's head into the air—take a series of consecutive headshots.

CHAPTER 6 CARNIVAL LIFE



The best way to take "Pig" Josh down is to get behind him and pop him in the head—when you do, he'll be stunned, so don't hesitate and drill him in the head with several more successive shots. Don't try to man the Galling gun—if you do, Josh will sneak up on you from behind and strike.



If you ever lose track of "Pig" Josh, take a look at where Jack Swift is shooting. If Josh runs after you, you can avoid his deadly blast if you hop away from him at the last minute before he strikes. Never try to take Josh head on.

CHAPTER 8 ROGUE VALLEY



There are three treasures in this Chapter—all of them are located on the ledge on the outside of the tall mountain. Here's where you can find each one.



You can find the first one just down the cliffs near the wooden bridge.



The second one is located at the area as shown in the above screen. After you kill the bad guys, go down the ravine to the side that leads to a cave that leads to the outside stone walkway.



You can find the treasure near the entrance to the outer catwalk.



The third one is near the boss (after the Duel). Look for the tall tree and then jump down to the ledge on the left and jump down to the ledge after that.



You can find the treasure in a corner near where you land.

CHAPTER 10 THE CEMETERY



This Chapter culminates in a battle with Mr. Black, a death-obsessed nutcase who carries a Gatling gun in his coffin. At the start of the fight, position Black's goons between you and him so he guns down them all.



Defeating Mr. Black is all about run-n-gun tactics—do not try to take cover behind any of the tombstones or grave markers because Black's Gatling gun can easily shatter them with a burst of gunfire.



Aim for Black's head, fire off some headshots, and then run-n-roll when he returns fire.



Don't try to get too close to Black, either; if you do, he'll swing his coffin in a circle, knocking you away and on your head.

CHAPTER 11 RANGE WAR



Shoot the locks off the barn gates while standing outside of the barn—that should give you enough room to dodge the animals that usually charge out of the gates.



You can find some health behind the small wooden crate near the chicken coop. Don't forget that you can also ride any of the cattle scattered across the property.



When fighting the bosses, look for one of them to start twirling a rope above their head—when you see this, immediately shoot the person twirling the rope to break the attack. If you wait too long, you'll get roped and dragged on the ground.

CHAPTER 12 SALOON FIGHT



You can find a sweet purchasable power-up from one of the ladies in the bathtub on the second floor. Hot Bath increases your health maximum.



Once you get past the bar brawl, you take on the boss, who attacks in two stages. The first part has

Sam perched on the balcony, from where he throws large barrels at you, and his chums take potshots with sniper fire.



After you take out Sam's buddies and inflict some damage on him, he jumps to the barroom floor and switches to body slams and bull charges.



Initially, try to position yourself so there's a table between you and Sam because when he charges, he should hit one of the tables. After he hits a table, he is stunned—that's your opportunity to drill him in the head with successive headshots before he regains his senses and repeats the pattern.



But what to do when all the tables are destroyed? Wait for Sam to jump on stage, then jump off and run to the wall farthest from. Wait for him to charge and then jump back onto the stage so he has enough distance to charge. When he charges the stage, he hits the edge and is stunned—that's your chance to score some consecutive headshots.

CHAPTER 13 THE TRAITOR



This is an unlucky Chapter as it is one of the most difficult parts of the entire game. After the first wave of enemy troops, you must take out eight enemy cannons. You can find

good cover from the cannon fire behind the crates in the middle of the bridge.



If you find yourself besieged by enemy soldiers, launch a flare at them; a friendly cannonball should arrive soon to wipe them out.

CHAPTER 15 DEAR MOUNTAIN



You can find a hidden weapon near the beginning of the stage (as shown with an "X" on the above map).



When you find the chest, shoot it open and take the prize—a Faith Rifle. Be sure to obtain this item because it will come in handy later.



Grizzly-hops, so when he stops and you hear a knife unsheathed, hit him with arrows or rifle rounds (headshots) continuously until he starts hopping again or drops to the ground—when he lands, hit him a few more times (to inflict real damage, try a flaming arrow). For a better vantage point, try standing on one of the rocks.



If you don't have time to set up a shot, position yourself so there's an object between you and Grizzly. Even if you're moving, Grizzly's knife throw always hits when he stands atop a tall structure.



On the ground, Grizzly is deadly as he likes to hit you with Snake Oil, which burns like fire.

CHAPTER 16 JAILBREAK



At the start of this Chapter, turn around and talk to the skeleton. You can purchase Horseshoe and Snake Oil. You can find the key to the Mine in the room with the generator, table, and chair. Unlock the door to the Mine.



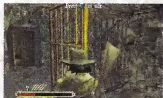
In the next area, a Map has been added in the pause menu. Your first destination should be the Jail Cell.



Take out the guard in front of the Jail, take his key, and open the door. Take the key, but don't waste any time trying to free the lady inside the cage because you don't have that key yet.



Head to the Supply Room, unlock the door, and take the key inside of the room.



Return to the Jail Cell, open the cage, and talk to the lady two times. The second time you converse with her, she sells you a Kiss (which increases your health to max). Before you leave, take the key from inside the cage (it unlocks the Lounge, your new destination).



When you reach the Lounge, a Duel begins against three bad guys. If you lose but have enough health, the battle will continue after the slow-motion sequence.

CHAPTER 17 THE MINE



There are two bosses in this Chapter: Ted is the guy who shoots you, Tony is the guy who burns you. Take out Ted first, but beware of Tony's "power" to revive his fallen brother and give him a little health.



If you take out Ted and Tony tries to revive him, Tony will be vulnerable to an attack, so use the opportunity to hammer away at him with headshots.

REWARDS

STORY MODE



Each Chapter in Story Mode can unlock up to two secrets, depending on your performance. There are two rankings, Good and Excellent. To get a Good ranking and a reward, all you must do is finish that Chapter. To get an Excellent rating, the requirements are greater. At the end of each Chapter, you can earn a star in Accuracy, Damage Taken, Time, and Best Combo. If you earn three stars (or more) in any Chapter, you will get an Excellent award, which unlocks a secret (see "Excellent Requirements and Rewards" on the next page). If you fail to earn an Excellent rating on a Chapter, you can replay that Chapter until you earn one.

BOUNTY HUNTER MODE



Once you finish the game's Story Mode, Bounty Hunter Mode is unlocked. This mode has the same Chapters as Story Mode, but each one has a specific objective that must be completed.



Not all Chapters have a Bounty Hunter reward. The objectives and rewards for the Chapters are listed on the next page (see "Bounty Hunter Rewards").

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EXCELLENT REQUIREMENTS AND REWARDS

Chapter	Minimum Accuracy	Damage Taken	Time	Minimum Combo	Reward
Chapter 1: Bull's Eye	50%	40%	5m 30s	\$150	Broken Creek (Showdown Level)
Chapter 2: Bounty Hunter	66%	100%	3m 50s	\$200	"Big Oat" Whitney (Showdown Character)
Chapter 3: Ugly Streetfight	70%	125%	5m	\$200	Freak Show (Showdown Level)
Chapter 5: Railroaded	55%	200%	8m 20s	\$120	Rico Pedrosa (Showdown Character)
Chapter 6: Carnival Life	66%	200%	8m	\$200	"Pig" Josh (Showdown Character)
Chapter 7: Freak Show	60%	200%	5m 50s	\$200	Breach Loader (Upgrade)
Chapter 8: Rogue Valley	66%	200%	5m	\$200	Bad Bessie (Showdown Character)
Chapter 10: The Cemetery	75%	250%	8m 20s	\$200	Mr. Black (Showdown Character)
Chapter 11: Range War	60%	180%	7m	\$200	Holstein Hal (Showdown Character)
Chapter 12: Saloon Fight	66%	200%	10m	\$100	Sam (Showdown Character)
Chapter 13: The Traitor	66%	80%	10m	\$60	Health Max Up
Chapter 14: Sunset Canyon	66%	80%	5m 45s	\$200	Focus Max Up
Chapter 15: Bear Mountain	66%	300%	10m	\$200	Focus Max Up
Chapter 17: The Mine	66%	100%	3m	\$200	"Smiley" Fowler (Showdown Character)
Chapter 19: Hell Pass	66%	200%	10m	\$200	Gabriel Navarro (Showdown Character)
Chapter 20: Fort Diego	66%	200%	9m	\$200	Colonel Daren (Showdown Character)
Chapter 21: Devils & Angels	5%	175%	9m 35s	\$200	General Diego (Showdown Character)
Chapter 24: Battle Finale	66%	150%	5m	\$200	Mr. Kelley (Showdown Character)
Chapter 25: The Siege	66%	400%	9m 20s	\$200	Jason Cornet (Showdown Character)
Chapter 27: Fall From Grace	20%	50%	2m 30s	\$200	Governor Griffon (Showdown Character)

BOUNTY HUNTER REWARDS

Chapter	Objective	Reward
Chapter 1: Bull's Eye	Shoot all enemies only in the head!	Falling Star (Showdown Character)
Chapter 2: Bounty Hunter	Clear the level without being hit.	"Curly" Shaw (Showdown Character)
Chapter 3: Ugly Streetfight	Complete the level without hitting the Sheriff.	"Twiggy" Phelps (Showdown Character)
Chapter 5: Railroaded	Defeat Hoss within 2 minutes!	Sheriff Bartlett (Showdown Character)
Chapter 6: Carnival Life	Get a combo for over \$500 and defeat Pig Josh.	Fight (Showdown Character)
Chapter 7: Freak Show	Kill Atlas and get a combo for over \$300.	Professor Perry (Showdown Character)
Chapter 8: Rogue Valley	Find the 3 treasures	"Sissy" Fess (Showdown Character)
Chapter 9: Ghost Town	Complete the level in 4 minutes!	"Dig" Fowler (Showdown Character)
Chapter 11: Range War	Get a combo for over \$200.	Smitty (Showdown Character)
Chapter 12: Saloon Fight	Keep all 3 girls alive.	Natalie (Showdown Character)
Chapter 13: The Traitor	Keep at least 2 charge setters alive.	Fallen Creek (Showdown Level)
Chapter 14: Sunset Canyon	Steal a horse without being spotted.	Sunset Canyon (Showdown Level)
Chapter 15: Bear Mountain	Get to the source of the river without alerting the patrolling guards.	Grizzly (Showdown Character)
Chapter 17: The Mine	Complete the level in 3 minutes.	Sad Stars (Cheat)
Chapter 18: Stagecoach	Kill 40 enemies.	No HUD (Cheat)
Chapter 20: Fort Diego	Get a combo for over \$300.	Bite the Bullet (Cheat)
Chapter 21: End of the Line	Get a combo for over \$200.	No Distortion (Cheat)
Chapter 24: Battle Finale	Kill all of the pedestrians in 1 minute.	Infinite Focus (Cheat)
Chapter 25: The Siege	Complete the level with Jack's health at over 50%	Golden Gun (Cheat)
Chapter 27: Fall From Grace	Complete the level in 1 minute!	Invulnerability (Cheat)

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WIN!



MLB 2005

All Players, All Stadiums, and More



At the Main Menu, enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cheat. If you entered the code correctly, your controller will vibrate.

All Players: Press Left, Up, Left, Right, Down, Right, Left, Up.

All Stadiums: Press Down, Up, Left, Right, Up, Right, Up, Down.

All Teams: Press Left, Right, Right, Down, Down, Left, Up, Up.

All Uniforms: Press Up, Down, Right, Left, Down, Right, Down, Up.

Beans Mode: Press Right, Right, Right, Right, Right, Right, Left, Down.

Big Ball Mode: Press Up, Up, Right, Left, Up, Up, Right, Left.

Big Head Mode: Press Left, Right, Left, Right, Up, Down, Up, Down.

Black and White Mode: Press Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right.

Faster Runners: Press Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right, Up, Up.

Slower Runners: Press Right, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Down, Down.

Small Head Mode: Press Up, Down, Up, Up, Right, Right, Right, Left.

Super Pitch Break: Press Right, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Up, Up.

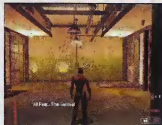
Super Pitch Speed: Press Up, Up, Up, Left, Left, Left, Left, Right.

Super Six Pitches: Press Down, Up, Down, Right, Right, Right, Right, Left.

Cole Sanchez—Tucson, Arizona

THE SUFFERING

Full Health, Full Insanity Meter, and More



During gameplay, simultaneously press and hold L1, R1, and X, and then enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cheat. If you entered the code correctly, you'll hear a confirming message.

Acid Mode: Press Left, Left, R2, Right, Right, R2, Up, Up, R2, Down, Down, R2.

All Documents: Press Right, Left, Up, Left, R2, Right, Down, Right.

All Normal Weapons and Items: Press Down, Up, Down, Left, Right, Left, R2, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Right, Down, Left, R2, Down, Down, Down, R2, R2.

Black and White Mode: Press Up, R2, Left, R2, Down, R2, Right, R2.

Bloody Family Picture: Press Left, Down, Left, Down, Left, Down, R2.

Bloody Torque: Press Up, Down, Left, Right.

Clean Torque: Press Down, Up, Right, Left.

Full Flashlight: Press Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Right, Down, Left, R2.

Full Health: Press Down, Down, Down, R2, Up, Up, Down, Up, R2.

Full Insanity Meter: Press Right, Right, Right, R2, Left, Left, Right, Left, R2.

Full Xombium Bottle: Press Right, Right, Up, Up, R2, Left, Right, R2, Right, Up, Right, R2.

Gonzo Gun: Press Left, R2, R2, Right, Left, Right, Left, Up, R2, R2, R2, Down, Up, Down, Up, R2.

New Family Picture: Press Up, Right, Up, Right, Up, Right, R2.

Raise Evil Meter: Press Left, Left, Down, Up.

Raise Goodness Meter: Press Up, Up, Right, Up.

Shotgun: Press Left, Left, Left, Down, Down, Down.

Tommy Gun: Press Down, Right, Up, Left, Down, R2, Left, Left, Right, Right, R2, Down, Up, Left, Right, R2.

A large, dark image of Darth Vader in his iconic suit and helmet, pointing his right hand towards the text. The background is a deep red.

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SAMURAI JACK: THE SHADOW OF AKU

Full Zen Meter



Pause the game, simultaneously press and hold Left on L3 and Right on R3, and then press O, X, square, triangle. If you entered the code correctly, your Zen meter will be full.

STARSKY & HUTCH

Monster Truck, Trippy Camera, and More



Pause the game and then enter the following codes to unlock these cheats. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear.

Big Head Mode: Press triangle, square, X, O, O, X, square, triangle.

Monster Truck: Press L1, L1, Left, Right, L3, L3, L3, L3.

Trike: Press Up, Up, Left, Left, R1, R2, L1, L2.

Trippy Camera: Press L1, L2, R1, R2, Left, Left, Up, Up.

WHIRL TOUR

All Characters and Character Levels, and Complete All Objectives

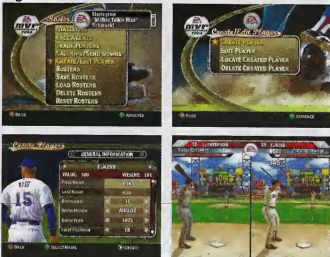


All Characters and Character Levels: At the Main Menu, press Y, B, X, Y, Down, Right, Up, Left, L, L Right, Right, Down, Up, R, X, Left, B, B, Down. If you entered the code correctly, all characters and character levels will be unlocked for all modes.

Complete All Objectives: Pause the game during story mode and the press X, X, B, X, X, Y, X, X, L, R. If you entered the code correctly, a confirmation message will appear when you unpause the game.

MVP BASEBALL 2004

Create Players With Big and Small Bats



At the Main Menu, select Roster Management and then select Create/Edit Player. At the Create/Edit Player screen, select Create Player and then enter the following names to create a player with its perspective attributes.

Passwords are case-sensitive, and a "-" designates a blank space.

Big Bat: jacob paterson

Small Bat: erik_kiss

DYNASTY WARRIORS 3 XTREME LEGENDS

View Secret Endings



At the main menu, select Options, and at the Options screen, select Opening. At the Opening screen, highlight "play," press and hold L1 and R1, and then press X. If you entered the code correctly, a secret-ending movie will play.



A land of darkness, as darkness itself, and of the shadow of death,
without any order, and where the light is as darkness. - Job 10:22

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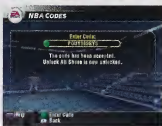
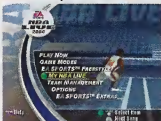
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At the main menu, choose My NBA Live and then select NBA Codes. Enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cheats. If you entered the code correctly, a confirmation message will appear.

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All Hardwood Classic Jerseys:	725JKUPLMM
All NBA Gear:	ERT9976KJ3
All Shoes:	POUY985GY5
All Team Gear:	YREY5625WQ

MARIO GOLF: TOADSTOOL TOUR

Extra Tournaments



At the title screen, press and hold Z, and then press Start. At the Main Menu, select Extras, and at the Extras screen, choose Password Tournament. At the Password Tournament screen, enter the following passwords to unlock these tournaments. If you entered the code correctly, the tournament will automatically begin.

Bowser Badlands Tour:	9L3L9K8R
Bowser Jr.'s Jumbo Tourney:	2GPL67PN
Peach's Castle Grounds Course:	ELBUT3PX

PITFALL: THE LOST EXPEDITION

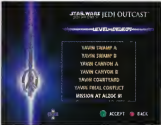
Play as Nicole



At the title screen, simultaneously press and hold L and R, and then press Left, Up, Down, Up, X, Up, Up. If you entered the code correctly, you'll see a confirming message on screen and be able to play as Nicole when you start a new game.

STAR WARS JEDI KNIGHT II: JEDI OUTCAST

All Levels and Unlimited Force



At the Main Menu, select Extras, and at the Extras screen, choose Cheats. At the Cheats screen, enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cheats. If you entered the code correctly, you'll hear a yell.

All Levels:	DINGO
Unlimited Force:	SCOOTER

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: OPERATION SURMA



Level Select



At the Main Menu, select Profiles. At the Profiles screen, highlight "Jasmine Curry" and then simultaneously press L, R, B, and Y. If you entered the code correctly, levels will be available for selection at the Main Menu.

TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX 3



Level Select



At the main menu, press L1, R2, L2, R1, Left, Right, □, ○. Now, all levels will be unlocked in Custom Mission mode.

DYNASTY WARRIORS 3



All Free Mode Stages and All Generals



At the main menu, enter the following codes to unlock the corresponding cheats. If you entered the code correctly, you'll hear cheering.

All Free Mode Stages: Press R1, R2, L2, L1, □, L1, L2, R2, R1, △.

All Generals: Press R2, R2, R2, L1, △, L2, L2, L2, R1, □.

ESPN NHL HOCKEY



Unlock Everything



At the Main Menu, select Game Modes, and at the Game Modes screen, press R1, R1, L1, Left, Left, Down, ○, R1, ○, L1, Up, Right, ○, Down, Left, Left, ○, R1, Down, Up. If you entered the code correctly, a confirming message will appear.

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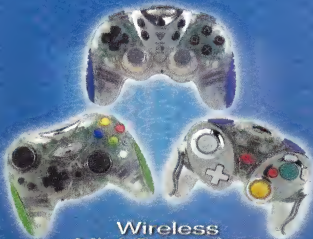
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